3 1761 03622 1828

HANDBOUND
AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO PRESS

5028

THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF WILLIAM CONGREVE, Esq;

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME SECOND.

321656
28. 11. 35

LONDON:
Printed for S. CROWDER, C. WARE, and T. PAYNE.
M.DCC.LXXIII.

PR
3360
D73
v. 2.

THE

CONTENTS.

I. The MOURNING BRIDE. A Tragedy.
II. The WAY OF THE WORLD. A Comedy.
III. The JUDGMENT OF PARIS. A Masque.
IV. SEMELE. An Opera.
V. A LETTER concerning HUMOUR in COMEDY.
VI. A VINDICATION of his PLAYS againſt Mr COLLIER.

THE

MOURNING BRIDE.

A

TRAGEDY.

" ——Neque enim lex æquior ulla,
" Quam necis artifices arte perire ſua."
Ovid. de Arte Am.

TO

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS,

THE

PRINCESS.

MADAM,

THAT high ſtation, which by your birth you hold above the people, exacts from every one, as a duty, whatever honours they are capable of paying to your Royal Highneſs: but that more exalted place, to which your virtues have raiſed you above the reſt of princes, makes the attribute of our admiration and praiſe rather a choice more immediately preventing that duty.

The public gratitude is ever founded on a public benefit; and what is univerſally bleſſed, is always an univerſal bleſſing. Thus from yourſelf we derive the offerings which we bring; and that incenſe which ariſes to your name, only returns to its original, and but naturally requites the parent of its being.

From hence it is that this poem, conſtituted on a moral, whoſe end is to recommend and to encourage virtue, of conſequence has recourſe to your Royal Highneſs's patronage; aſpiring to caſt itſelf beneath your feet, and declining approbation, 'till you ſhall condeſcend to own it, and vouchſafe to ſhine upon it as on a creature of your influence.

It is from the example of princes that virtue becomes a fashion in the people; for even they, who are averse to instruction, will yet be fond of imitation.

But there are multitudes, who never can have means nor opportunities of so near an access, as to partake of the benefit of such examples. And to these, Tragedy, which distinguishes itself from the vulgar poetry by the dignity of its characters, may be of use and information. For they who are at that distance from original greatness, as to be deprived of the happiness of contemplating the perfections and real excellencies of your Royal Highness's person in your court, may yet behold some small sketches and imagings of the virtues of your mind, abstracted, and represented on the theatre.

Thus poets are instructed, and instruct; not alone by precepts, which persuade, but also by examples which illustrate. Thus is delight interwoven with instruction; when not only virtue is prescribed, but also represented.

But if we are delighted with the liveliness of a feigned representation of great and good persons and their actions, how must we be charmed with beholding the persons themselves! If one or two excelling qualities, barely touched in the single action and small compass of a play, can warm an audience, with a concern and regard even for the seeming success and prosperity of the actor; with what zeal must the hearts of all be filled for the continued and increasing happiness of those, who are the true and living instances of elevated and

perſiſting virtue! Even the vicious themſelves muſt have a ſecret veneration for thoſe peculiar graces and endowments, which are daily ſo eminently conſpicuous in your Royal Highneſs; and though repining, feel a pleaſure which, in ſpite of envy, they perforce approve.

If in this piece, humbly offered to your Royal Highneſs, there ſhall appear the reſemblance of any of thoſe many excellencies which you ſo promiſcuouſly poſſeſs, to be drawn ſo as to merit your leaſt approbation, it has the end and accompliſhment of its deſign. And however imperfect it may be in the whole, through the inexperience or incapacity of the author, yet, if there is ſo much as to convince your Royal Highneſs, that a play may be with induſtry ſo diſpoſed (in ſpite of the licentious practice of the modern theatre) as to become ſometimes an innocent, and not unprofitable entertainment; it will abundantly gratify the ambition, and recompenſe the endeavours of,

Your Royal Highneſs's moſt obedient,

and moſt humbly devoted ſervant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr BETTERTON.

THE time has been when plays were not so plenty,
And a less number now would well content ye.
New plays did then like almanacs appear;
And one was thought sufficient for a year:
Tho' they are more like almanacs of late;
For in one year, I think, they're out of date.
Nor were they without reason join'd together;
For just as one prognosticates the weather,
How plentiful the crop, or scarce the grain,
What peals of thunder, and what show'rs of rain;
So t'other can foretel, by certain rules,
What crops of coxcombs, or what floods of fools.
In such like prophesies were poets skill'd,
Which now they find in their own tribe fulfill'd:
The dearth of wit they did so long presage,
Is fall'n on us, and almost starves the stage.
Were you not griev'd, as often as you saw
Poor actors thrash such empty sheafs of straw;
Toiling and lab'ring at their lungs expence,
To start a jest, or force a little sense.
Hard fate for us! still harder in th' event;
Our authors sin, but we alone repent.
Still they proceed, and, at our charge, write worse;
'Twere some amends if they could reimburse:
But there's the devil, tho' their cause is lost,
There's no recovering damages or cost.
Good wits, forgive this liberty we take,
Since custom gives the losers leave to speak.
But if provok'd, your dreadful wrath remains,
Take your revenge upon the coming scenes:

For that damn'd poet's ſpar'd who damns a brother,
As one thief 'ſcapes that executes another.
Thus far alone does to the wits relate;
But from the reſt we hope another fate.
To pleaſe and move has been our poet's theme,
Art may direct, but nature is his aim;
And nature miſs'd, in vain he boaſts his art,
For only nature can affect the heart.
Then freely judge the ſcenes that ſhall enſue;
But as with freedom, judge with candour too.
He wou'd not loſe thro' prejudice his cauſe;
Nor wou'd obtain precariouſly applauſe,
Impartial cenſure he requeſts from all,
Prepar'd by juſt decrees to ſtand or fall.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

MANUEL, the King of Granada,	Mr VERBRUGGEN.
GONSALEZ, his favourite,	Mr SANDFORD.
GARCIA, ſon to Gonſalez,	Mr SCUDAMOUR.
PEREZ, captain of the guards,	Mr FREEMAN.
ALONZO, an officer, creature to Gonſalez,	Mr ARNOLD.
OSMYN, a noble priſoner,	Mr BETTERTON.
HELI, a priſoner, his friend,	Mr BOWMAN.
SELIM, an eunuch,	Mr BAILY.

WOMEN.

ALMERIA, the princeſs of Granada,	Mrs BRACEGIRDLE.
ZARA, a captive queen,	Mrs BARRY.
LEONORA, a chief attendant on the Princeſs,	Mrs BOWMAN.

Women, Eunuchs, and Mutes attending Zara, Guards, *&c.*

The SCENE, GRANADA.

THE

MOURNING BRIDE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Room of State.

The Curtain, rising slowly to soft Music, discovers ALMERIA *in Mourning,* LEONORA *waiting in Mourning.*

After the Music, Almeria *rises from her Chair, and comes forward.*

ALMERIA.

MUSIC has charms to soothe a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.
I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd,
And, as with living souls, have been inform'd,
By magic numbers and persuasive sound.
What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
Than trees or flint? O force of constant woe!
'Tis not in harmony to calm my griefs.
Anselmo sleeps, and is at peace; last night
The silent tomb receiv'd the good old king;
He and his sorrows now are safely lodg'd
Within its cold but hospitable bosom.
Why am not I at peace?

Leon. Dear Madam, cease,
Or moderate your griefs; there is no cause——

Alm. No cause! peace, peace; there is eternal cause,
And misery eternal will succeed.
Thou canst not tell—thou hast indeed no cause.

Leon. Believe me, Madam, I lament Anselmo,
And always did compassionate his fortune:
Have often wept to see how cruelly
Your father kept in chains his fellow-king:
And oft at night when all have been retir'd,

Have ſtol'n from bed, and to his priſon crept;
Where, while his jailor ſlept, I thro' the grate
Have ſoftly whiſper'd, and enquir'd his health;
Sent in my ſighs and pray'rs for his deliv'rance;
For ſighs and prayers were all that I could offer.

Alm. Indeed thou haſt a ſoft and gentle nature,
That thus couldſt melt to ſee a ſtranger's wrongs.
O Leonora, hadſt thou known Anſelmo,
How wou'd thy heart have bled to ſee his ſuff'rings!
Thou hadſt no cauſe, but general compaſſion.

Leon. Love of my royal miſtreſs gave me cauſe,
My love of you begot my grief for him;
For I had heard that when the chance of war
Had bleſs'd Auſelmo's arms with victory,
And the rich ſpoil of all the field, and you,
The glory of the whole, were made the prey
Of his ſucceſs; that then, in ſpite of hate,
Revenge, and that hereditary feud
Between Valentia's and Granada's kings,
He did endear himſelf to your affection,
By all the worthy and indulgent ways
His moſt induſtrious goodneſs cou'd invent;
Propoſing by a match between Alphonſo
His ſon, the brave Valentia prince, and you,
To end the long diſſention, and unite
The jarring crowns.

Alm. Alphonſo! O Alphonſo!
Thou too art quiet—long haſt been at peace—
Both, both—father and ſon are now no more.
Then why am I? O when ſhall I have reſt?
Why do I live to ſay you are no more?
Why are all theſe things thus—Is it of force?
Is there neceſſity I muſt be miſerable?
Is it of moment to the peace of Heav'n
That I ſhou'd be afflicted thus?—If not,
Why is it thus contriv'd? Why are things laid
By ſome unſeen hand ſo, as of ſure conſequence,
They muſt to me bring curſes, grief of heart,
The laſt diſtreſs of life, and ſure deſpair?

Leon. Alas, you search too far, and think too deeply.
Alm. Why was I carried to Anselmo's court?
Or there, why was I us'd so tenderly?
Why not ill-treated like an enemy?
For so my father would have us'd his child.
O Alphonso! Alphonso!
Devouring seas have wash'd thee from my sight,
No time shall rase thee from my memory;
No, I will live to be thy monument;
The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb:
But in my heart thou art interr'd; there, there,
Thy dear resemblance is for ever fix'd;
My love, my lord, my husband still, though lost.
Leon. Husband! O heavens!
Alm. Alas, what have I said?
My grief has hurried me beyond all thought:
I would have kept the secret; though I know
Thy love and faith to me deserve all confidence.
But 'tis the wretch's comfort still to have
Some small reserve of near and inward woe,
Some unsuspected hoard of darling grief,
Which they unseen may wail, and weep and mourn,
And, glutton-like, alone devour.
Leon. Indeed
I knew not this.
Alm. O no, thou know'st not half,
Know'st nothing of my sorrows.—If thou didst—
If I should tell thee, wouldst thou pity me?
Tell me; I know thou would'st, thou art compassionate.
Leon. Witness these tears——
Alm. I thank thee—Leonora,
Indeed I do, for pitying thy sad mistress:
For 'tis, alas, the poor prerogative
Of greatness, to be wretched and unpitied——
But I did promise I would tell thee—What?
My miseries? thou dost already know 'em;
And when I told thee thou didst nothing know,
It was because thou didst not know Alphonso:

For to have known my loſs, thou muſt have known
His worth, his truth, and tenderneſs of love.

Leon. The memory of that brave prince ſtands fair
In all report——
And I have heard imperfectly his loſs;
But fearful to renew your troubles paſt,
I never did preſume to aſk the ſtory.

Alm. If for my ſwelling heart I can, I'll tell thee.
I was a welcome captive in Valentia,
Ev'n on the day when Manuel, my father,
Led on his conqu'ring troops, high at the gates
Of King Anſelmo's palace; which in rage,
And heat of war, and dire revenge, he fir'd.
The good king flying to avoid the flames,
Started amidſt his foes, and made captivity
His fatal refuge——Wou'd that I had fallen
Amid thoſe flames—but 'twas not ſo decreed.
Alphonſo, who foreſaw my father's cruelty,
Had borne the queen and me on board a ſhip
Ready to ſail; and when this news was brought,
We put to ſea; but being betray'd by ſome
Who knew our flight, we cloſely were purſu'd,
And almoſt taken; when a ſudden ſtorm
Drove us, and thoſe that follow'd, on the coaſt
Of Afric; there our veſſel ſtruck the ſhore,
And bulging 'gainſt a rock was daſh'd in pieces!
But Heav'n ſpar'd me for yet much more affliction!
Conducting them who follow'd us to ſhun
The ſhoal, and ſave me floating on the waves,
While the good king and my Alphonſo periſh'd.

Leon. Alas! were you then wedded to Alphonſo?

Alm. That day, that fatal day, our hands were join'd.
For when my Lord beheld the ſhip purſuing,
And ſaw her rate ſo far exceeding ours;
He came to me, and begg'd me by my love,
I wou'd conſent the prieſt ſhou'd make us one;
That whether death or victory enſu'd,
I might be his beyond the power of fate:

The Queen too did assist his suit——I granted;
And in one day, was wedded, and a widow.
Leon. Indeed 'twas mournful——
Alm. 'Twas—as I have told thee——
For which I mourn, and will for ever mourn;
Nor will I change these black and dismal robes,
Or ever dry these swoln and watry eyes;
Or ever taste content, or peace of heart,
While I have life, and thought of my Alphonso.
Leon. Look down, good Heav'n, with pity on her sorrows,
And grant that time may bring her some relief.
Alm. O no, time gives increase to my afflictions.
The circling hours, that gather all the woes,
Which are diffus'd through the revolving year,
Come, heavy-laden with th' oppressing weight,
To me; with me, successively they leave
The sighs, the tears, the groans, the restless cares,
And all the damps of grief, that did retard their flight;
They shake their downy wings, and scatter all
The dire collected dews on my poor head;
Then fly with joy and swiftness from me.
Leon. Hark!
The distant shouts proclaim your father's triumph;
[*Shouts at a distance.*
O cease, for Heaven's sake, assuage a little
This torrent of your grief; for much I fear,
'Twill urge his wrath to see you drown'd in tears,
When joy appears in every other face.
Alm. And joy he brings to ev'ry other heart,
But double, double weight of woe to mine;
For with him Garcia comes—Garcia, to whom
I must be-sacrific'd, and all the vows
I gave my dear Alphonso basely broken.
No, it shall never be; for I will die;
First, die ten thousand deaths——Look down, look down,
[*Kneels.*
Alphonso, hear the sacred vow I make;
One moment cease to gaze on perfect bliss,

And bend thy glorious eyes on earth and me;
And thou, Anſelmo, if yet thou art arriv'd,
Thro' all impediments of purging fire,
To that bright heav'n, where my Alphonſo reigns,
Behold thou alſo, and attend my vow.
If ever I do yield, or give conſent,
By any action, word, or thought, to wed
Another lord; may then juſt Heav'n ſhow'r down
Unheard-of curſes on me, greater far
(If ſuch there be in angry Heaven's vengeance)
Than any I have yet endur'd——And now [*Riſing.*
My heart has ſome relief; having ſo well
Diſcharg'd this debt, incumbent on my love.
Yet one thing more I wou'd engage from thee.

Leon. My heart, my life and will, are only yours.

Alm. I thank thee 'Tis but this; anon when all
Are wrapp'd and buſied in the general joy,
Thou wilt withdraw, and privately with me
Steal forth, to viſit good Anſelmo's tomb.

Leon. Alas, I fear ſome fatal reſolution.

Alm. No, on my life, my faith, I mean no ill;
Nor violence. I feel myſelf more light,
And more at large, ſince I have made this vow.
Perhaps I would repeat it there more ſolemnly.
'Tis that, or ſome ſuch melancholy thought,
Upon my word no more.

Leon. I will attend you.

SCENE II.

ALMERIA, LEONORA, ALONZO.

Alon. The Lord Gonſalez comes to tell your Highneſs
The King is juſt arrived.

Alm. Conduct him in. [*Exit* Alon.
That's his pretence; his errand is, I know,
To fill my ears with Garcia's valiant deeds;
And gild and magnify his ſon's exploits.

But I am arm'd with ice around my heart,
Not to be warm'd with words, or idle eloquence.

SCENE III.

GONSALEZ, ALMERIA, LEONORA.

Gon. Be ev'ry day of your long life like this.
The sun, bright conqueſt, and your brighter eyes,
Have all conſpir'd to blaze promiſcuous light,
And bleſs this day with moſt unequal'd luſtre.
Your Royal Father, my victorious Lord,
Loaden with ſpoils, and ever-living laurel,
Is entering now in martial pomp the palace.
Five hundred mules precede his ſolemn march,
Which groan beneath the weight of Mooriſh wealth.
Chariots of war adorn'd with glittering gems,
Succeed; and next, a hundred neighing ſteeds,
White as the fleecy rain on Alpine hills;
That bound and foam, and champ the golden bit,
As they diſdain'd the victory they grace.
Priſoners of war in ſhining fetters follow:
And captains of the nobleſt blood of Afric
Sweat by his chariot wheel, and lick and grind,
With gnaſhing teeth, the duſt his triumphs raiſe.
The ſwarming populace ſpread every wall,
And cling, as if with claws they did enforce
Their hold thro' clifted ſtones, ſtretching and ſtaring,
As if they were all eyes, and every limb
Would feed its faculty of admiration.
While you alone retire and ſhun this ſight;
This ſight, which is indeed not ſeen (tho' twice
The multitude ſhould gaze) in abſence of your eyes.

Alm. My Lord, my eyes ungratefully behold
The gilded trophies of exterior honours.
Nor will my ears be charm'd with ſounding words,
Or pompous phraſe; the pageantry of ſouls.
But that my father is return'd in ſafety,
I bend to Heav'n with thanks.

Gon. Excellent princeſs!

But 'tis a task unfit for my weak age,
With dying words, to offer at your praise.
Garcia, my son, your beauty's lowest slave,
Has better done; in proving with his sword
The force and influence of your matchless charms.

Alm. I doubt not of the worth of Garcia's deeds,
Which had been brave, tho' I had ne'er been born.

Leon. Madam, the King. [*Flourish.*

Alm. My women. I would meet him.

[*Attendants to* Almeria *enter in mourning.*

SCENE IV.

Symphony of warlike music. Enter the KING, *attended by* GARCIA *and several officers. Files of Prisoners in chains, and Guards, who are ranged in order round the stage.* ALMERIA *meets the* King, *and kneels; afterwards* GONSALEZ *kneels and kisses the* King's *hand, while* Garcia *does the same to the Princess.*

King. Almeria, rise———My best Gonsalez, rise.
What, tears! my good old friend!

Gon. But tears of joy.
Believe me, Sir, to see you thus has fill'd
My eyes with more delight than they can hold.

King. By Heav'n thou lov'st me, and I'm pleas'd thou do'st.
Take it for thanks, old man, that I rejoice
To see thee weep on this occasion—some
Here are, who seem to mourn at our success!
Why is't, Almeria, that you meet our eyes,
Upon this solemn day, in these sad weeds?
In opposition to my brightness, you
And yours are all like daughters of affliction.

Alm. Forgive me, Sir, if I offend.
The year, which I have vow'd to pay to Heav'n
In mourning and strict life, for my deliverance
From wreck and death, wants yet to be expir'd.

King. Your zeal to Heav'n is great, so is your debt:
Yet something too is due to me, who gave
That life, which Heav'n preserv'd. A day bestow'd
In filial duty, had aton'd and given

A dispensation to your vow—No more.
'Twas weak and wilful—and a woman's error.
Yet—upon thought, it doubly wounds my sight,
To see that sable worn upon the day
Succeeding that, in which our deadliest foe,
Hated Anselmo, was inter'd———By Heav'n,
It looks as thou didst mourn for him: just so,
Thy senseless vow appear'd to bear its date,
Not from that hour wherein thou wert preserv'd.
Ha? What? thou dost not weep to think of that.

Gon. Have patience, Royal Sir; the Princess weeps
To have offended you. If fate decreed,
One pointed hour should be Alphonso's loss,
And her deliverance; is she to blame?

King. I tell thee she's to blame, not to have feasted
When my first foe was laid in earth, such enmity,
Such detestation, bears my blood to his;
My daughter should have revell'd at his death,
She should have made these palace-walls to shake,
And all this high and ample roof to ring
With her rejoicings. What, to mourn, and weep;
Then, then to weep, and pray, and grieve? By Heav'n,
There's not a slave, a shackled slave of mine,
But should have frail'd that hour, through all his care,
And shook his chains in transport and rude harmony.

Gon. What she has done, was in excess of goodness;
Betray'd by too much piety, to seem
As if she had offended.———Sure, no more.

King. To seem is to commit, at this conjuncture.
I wo' not have a seeming sorrow seen
To-day——Retire, divest yourself with speed
Of that offensive black; on me be all
The violation of your vow: for you,
It shall be your excuse, that I command it.

Gar. kneeling.] Your pardon, Sir, if I presume so far,
As to remind you of your gracious promise.

King. Rise, Garcia——I forgot. Yet stay, Almeria.

Alm. My boding heart!——What is your pleasure, Sir?

King. Draw near, and give your hand; and, Garcia, yours:
Receive this Lord, as one whom I have found
Worthy to be your husband, and my son.
Gar. Thus let me kneel to take——O not to take——
But to devote, and yield myself for ever
The slave and creature of my royal mistress.
Gon. O let me prostrate pay my worthless thanks——
King. No more; my promise long since pass'd, thy services,
And Garcia's well-try'd valour, all oblige me.
This day we triumph: but to morrow's sun,
Garcia, shall shine to grace thy nuptials——
Alm. Oh! [*Faints.*
Gar. She faints! help to support her.
Gon. She recovers.
King. A fit of bridal fear; how is't, Almeria?
Alm. A sudden chilness seizes on my spirits.
Your leave, Sir, to retire.
King. Garcia, conduct her.
[Garcia *leads* Almeria *to the door and returns.*
This idle vow hangs on her woman's fears.
I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,
And make it sin, not to renounce that vow
Which I'd have broken. Now, what would Alonzo?

SCENE V.

KING, GONSALEZ, GARCIA, ALONZO, *Attendants.*

Alon. Your beauteous captive, Zara, is arriv'd,
And with a train as if she still were wife
To Abucacim, and the Moor had conquer'd.
King. It was our will she should be so attended.
Bear hence these prisoners. Garcia, which is he,
Of whose mute valour you relate such wonders?
[*Prisoners led off.*
Gar. Osmyn, who led the Moorish horse; but he,
Great Sir, at her request, attends on Zara.
King. He is your prisoner; as you please dispose him.
Gar. I would oblige him, but he shuns my kindness;

And with a haughty mein, and ſtern civility,
Dumbly declines all offers: if he ſpeak,
'Tis ſcarce above a word; as he were born
Alone to do, and did diſdain to talk;
At leaſt, to talk where he muſt not command.

King. Such ſullenneſs, and in a man ſo brave,
Muſt have ſome other cauſe than his captivity.
Did Zara, then, requeſt he might attend her?

Gar. My Lord, ſhe did.

King. That, join'd with his behaviour,
Begets a doubt. I'd have 'em watch'd; perhaps
Her chains hang heavier on him than his own.

SCENE VI.

KING, GONSALEZ, GARCIA, ALONZO, ZARA *and* OSMYN *bound, conducted by* PEREZ *and a Guard, and attended by* SELIM *and ſeveral Mutes and Eunuchs in a train.*

King. What welcome, and what honours, beauteous Zara,
A king and conqueror can give, are yours.
A conqueror indeed, where you are won;
Who with ſuch luſtre ſtrike admiring eyes,
That had our pomp been with ſuch preſence grac'd,
Th' expecting croud had been deceiv'd; and ſeen
Their monarch enter not triumphant, but
In pleaſing triumph led; your beauty's ſlave.

Zara. If I on any terms could condeſcend
To like captivity, or think thoſe honours
Which conquerors in courteſy beſtow,
Of equal value with unborrow'd rule,
And native right to arbitrary ſway;
I might be pleas'd, when I behold the train
With uſual homage wait But when I feel
Theſe bonds, I look with lothing on myſelf;
And ſcorn vile ſlavery, tho' doubly hid
Beneath mock-praiſes, and diſſembling ſtate.

King. Thoſe bonds! 'Twas my command you ſhou'd be free.
How durſt you, Perez, diſobey?

Per. Great Sir,
Your order was, ſhe ſhou'd not wait your triumph;
But at ſome diſtance follow, thus attended.

King. 'Tis falſe; 'twas more; I bid ſhe ſhould be free:
If not in words, I bid it by my eyes.
Her eyes did more than bid——Free her and hers
With ſpeed——yet ſtay——my hands alone can make
Fit reſtitution here——Thus I releaſe you,
And by releaſing you, enſlave myſelf.

Zara. Such favours ſo conferr'd, tho' when unſought,
Deſerve acknowledgement from noble minds.
Such thanks, as one hating to be oblig'd——
Yet hating more ingratitude, can pay,
I offer.

King. born to excel, and to command!
As by tranſcendent beauty to attract
All eyes, ſo by pre-eminence of ſoul
To rule all hearts.
Garcia, what's he, who with contracted brow
[*Beholding* Oſmyn *as they unbind him.*
And ſullen port, glooms downward with his eyes;
At once regardleſs of his chains, or liberty?

Gar. That, Sir, is he of whom I ſpoke; that's Oſmyn.

King. He anſwers well the character you gave him.
Whence comes it, valiant Oſmyn, that a man
So great in arms, as thou art ſaid to be,
So hardly can endure captivity,
The common chance of war?

Oſm. Becauſe captivity
Has robb'd me of a dear and juſt revenge.

King. I underſtand not that.

Oſm I would not have you.

Zara. That gallant Moor in battle loſt a friend,
Whom more than life he lov'd; and the regret,
Of not revenging on his foes that loſs,
Has caus'd this melancholy and deſpair.

King. She does excuſe him: 'tis as I expected. [*To* Gon.
Gon. That friend may be herſelf; ſeem not to heed
His arrogant reply: ſhe looks concern'd.

King. I'll have inquiry made; perhaps his friend
Yet lives, and is a priſoner. His name?
Zara. Heli.
King. Garcia, that ſearch ſhall be your care:
It ſhall be mine to pay devotion here;
At this fair ſhrine to lay my laurels down,
And raiſe love's altar on the ſpoils of war.
Conqueſt and triumph, now, are mine no more:
Nor will I victory in camps adore:
For, ling'ring there, in long ſuſpence ſhe ſtands,
Shifting the prize in unreſolving hands:
Unus'd to wait, I broke through her delay,
Fix'd her by force, and ſnatch'd the doubtful day.
Now late I find that war is but her ſport;
In love the goddeſs keeps her awful court:
Fickle in fields, unſteadily ſhe flies,
But rules with ſettled ſway in Zara's eyes.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Repreſenting the Iſle of a Temple.

GARCIA, HELI, PEREZ.

GARCIA.

THIS way, we're told, Oſmyn was ſeen to walk;
Chooſing this lonely manſion of the dead,
To mourn, brave Heli, thy miſtaken fate.
Heli. Let Heav'n with thunder to the centre ſtrike me,
If to ariſe in very deed from death,
And to reviſit with my long-clos'd eyes
This living light, could to my ſoul, or ſenſe,
Afford a thought, or ſhow a glimpſe of joy,
In leaſt proportion to the vaſt delight
I feel, to hear of Oſmyn's name; to hear
That Oſmyn lives, and I again ſhall ſee him.
Gar. I've heard, with admiration, of your friendſhip.
Per. Yonder, my Lord, behold the noble Moor.
Heli. Where? where?
Gar. I ſaw him not, nor any like him——

Per. I saw him, when I spoke, thwarting my view,
And striding with distemper'd haste; his eyes
Seem'd flame, and flash'd upon me with a glance;
Then forward shot their fires, which he pursu'd,
As to some object frightful, yet not fear'd.

Gar. Let's haste to follow him, and know the cause.

Heli. My Lord, let me intreat you to forbear:
Leave me alone to find, and cure the cause.
I know his melancholy, and such starts
Are usual to his temper. It might raise him
To act some violence upon himself,
So to be caught in an unguarded hour,
And when his soul gives all her passion way
Secure and loose in friendly solitude.
I know his noble heart would burst with shame,
To be surpris'd by strangers in its frailty.

Gar. Go, gen'rous Heli, and relieve your friend.
Far be it from me, officiously to pry
Or press upon the privacies of others.

SCENE II.

GARCIA, PEREZ.

Gar. Perez, the King expects from our return
To have his jealousy confirm'd or clear'd,
Of that appearing love which Zara bears
To Osmyn; but some other opportunity
Must make that plain.

Per. To me 'twas long since plain,
And ev'ry look from him and her confirms it.

Gar. If so, unhappiness attends their love,
And I cou'd pity 'em. I hear some coming.
The friends perhaps are met; let us avoid 'em.

SCENE III.

ALMERIA, LEONORA.

Alm. It was a fancy'd noise, for all is hush'd.

Leon. It bore the accent of a human voice.

Alm. It was thy fear, or elſe ſome tranſient wind
Whiſtling thro' hollows of this vaulted iſle.
We'll liſten———

Leon. Hark!

Alm. No, all is huſh'd, and ſtill as death—'Tis dreadful!
How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whoſe ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof,
By its own weight made ſtedfaſt and immoveable,
Looking tranquillity. It ſtrikes an awe
And terror on my aching ſight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And ſhoot a chilneſs to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
Nay, quickly ſpeak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice———my own affrights me with its echoes.

Leon. Let us return; the horror of this place,
And ſilence, will increaſe your melancholy.

Alm. It may my fears, but cannot add to that.
No, I will on; ſhew me Anſelmo's tomb,
Lead me o'er bones and ſkulls and mould'ring earth
Of human bodies; for I'll mix with them.
Or wind me in the ſhroud of ſome pale coarſe
Yet green in earth, rather than be the bride
Of Garcia's more deteſted bed: that thought
Exerts my ſpirits; and my preſent fears
Are loſt in dread of greater ill. Then ſhew me,
Lead me, for I am bolder grown: lead on
Where I may kneel, and pay my vows again
To him, to Heav'n, and my Alphonſo's ſoul.

Leon. I go: but Heaven can tell with what regret.

SCENE IV.

The SCENE *opening diſcovers a place of tombs. One monument fronting the view greater than the reſt.*

Heli. I wander through this maze of monuments,
Yet cannot find him——Hark! ſure 'tis the voice
Of one complaining.—There it ſounds——I'll follow it.

SCENE V.

ALMERIA, LEONORA.

Leon. Behold the sacred vault, within whose womb
The poor remains of good Anselmo rest;
Yet fresh and unconsum'd by time or worms:
What do I see? O Heaven; either my eyes
Are false, or still the marble door remains
Unclos'd: the iron grates that lead to death
Beneath, are still wide-stretch'd upon their hinge,
And staring on us with unfolded leaves.

Alm. Sure 'tis the friendly yawn of death for me;
And that dumb mouth, significant in show,
Invites me to the bed where I alone
Shall rest; shew me the grave, where nature, weary
And long oppress'd with woes and bending cares,
May lay the burden down, and sink in slumbers
Of peace eternal. Death, grim death, will fold
Me in his leaden arms, and press me close
To his cold clayie breast: my father then
Will cease his tyranny; and Garcia too
Will fly my pale deformity with loathing.
My soul, enlarg'd from its vile bonds, will mount,
And range the starry orbs, and milky ways,
Of that refulgent world, where I shall swim
In liquid light, and float on seas of bliss
To my Alphonso's soul. O joy too great!
O ecstasy of thought! Help me, Anselmo;
Help me, Alphonso: take me, reach thy hand;
To thee, to thee I call, to thee, Alphonso:
O Alphonso!

SCENE VI.

ALMERIA, LEONORA, OSMYN *ascending from the tomb.*

Osm. Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso?
Alm. Angels, and all the host of heav'n, support me!
Osm. Whence is that voice, whose shrilness, from the grave,

And growing to his father's ſhrowd, roots up
Alphonſo?
Alm. Mercy! providence! O ſpeak,
Speak to it quickly, quickly; ſpeak to me,
Comfort me, help me, hold me, hide me, hide me,
Leonora, in thy boſom, from the light,
And from all eyes.
Oſm. Amazement and illuſion!
Rivet and nail me where I ſtand, ye powers; [*Coming forward.*
That motionleſs I may be ſtill deceiv'd.
Let me not ſtir, nor breathe, leſt I diſſolve
That tender, lovely form of painted air,
So like Almeria. Ha! it ſinks, it falls;
I'll catch it ere it goes, and graſp her ſhade.
'Tis life! 'tis warm! 'tis ſhe! 'tis ſhe herſelf!
Nor dead, nor ſhade, but breathing and alive!
It is Almeria, yes, it is my wife!

SCENE VII.

ALMERIA, LEONORA, OSMYN, HELI.

Leon. Alas, ſhe ſtirs not yet, nor lifts her eyes;
He too is fainting——Help me, help me, ſtranger,
Who-e'er thou art, and lend thy hand to raiſe
Theſe bodies.
Heli. Ha! 'tis he! and with Almeria!
O miracle of happineſs! O joy
Unhop'd for! does Almeria live!
Oſm. Where is ſhe?
Let me behold and touch her, and be ſure
'Tis ſhe; ſhew me her face, and let me feel
Her lips with mine——'Tis ſhe, I'm not deceiv'd;
I taſte her breath, I warm'd her and am warm'd,
Look up, Almeria, bleſs me with thy eyes;
Look on thy love, thy lover, and thy huſband.
Alm. I've ſworn I'll not wed Garcia; why d'ye force me?
Is this a father?
Oſm. Look on thy Alphonſo,
Thy father is not here, my love, nor Garcia:

Nor am I what I ſeem, but thy Alphonſo.
Am I ſo alter'd, or art thou ſo chang'd,
That ſeeing my diſguiſe, thou ſeeſt not me?
Alm. It is, it is Alphonſo; 'tis his face,
His voice, I know him now, I know him all.
O take me to thy arms, and bear me hence,
Back to the bottom of the boundleſs deep,
To ſeas beneath, where thou ſo long haſt dwelt.
O how haſt thou return'd? How haſt thou charm'd
The wildneſs of the waves and rocks to this?
That thus relenting, they have giv'n thee back
To earth, to light and life, to love and me.
Oſm. O I'll not aſk, nor anſwer how, or why
We both have backward trod the path of fate,
To meet again in life; to know I have thee,
Is knowing more than any circumſtance
Or means by which I have thee———
To fold thee thus, to preſs thy balmy lips,
And gaze upon thy eyes, is ſo much joy,
I have not leiſure to reflect, or know,
Or trifle time in thinking.
Alm. Stay a while———
Let me look on thee, yet a little more.
Oſm. What would'ſt thou? thou doſt put me from thee.
Alm. Yes.
Oſm. And why? What doſt thou mean? Why doſt thou gaze ſo?
Alm. I know not; 'tis to ſee thy face, I think——
It is too much! too much to bear and live!
To ſee him thus again is ſuch profuſion
Of joy, of bliſs——I cannot bear——I muſt
Be mad——I cannot be tranſported thus.
Oſm. Thou excellence, thou joy, thou heav'n of love!
Alm. Where haſt thou been? and how art thou alive?
How is all this? All-powerful Heav'n, what are we!
O my ſtrain'd heart!——let me again behold thee,
For I weep to ſee thee——Art thou not paler?
Much, much; how art thou chang'd?

Osm. Not in my love.

Alm. No, no, thy griefs, I know, have done this to thee.
Thou haſt wept much, Alphonſo; and, I fear,
Too much, too tenderly lamented me.

Osm. Wrong not my love, to ſay too tenderly.
No more, my life; talk not of tears or grief;
Affliction is no more, now thou art found.
Why doſt thou weep, and hold thee from my arms;
My arms which ake to fold thee faſt, and grow
To thee with twining? Come, come to my heart.

Alm. I will, for I ſhould never look enough.
They would have marry'd me; but I had ſworn
To Heav'n and thee, and ſooner wou'd have dy'd.

Osm. Perfection of all faithfulneſs and love!

Alm. Indeed I wou'd——Nay, I wou'd tell thee all,
If I cou'd ſpeak; how I have mourn'd and pray'd;
For I have pray'd to thee, as to a ſaint:
And thou haſt heard my prayer; for thou art come
To my diſtreſs, to my deſpair, which Heav'n
Could only by reſtoring thee have cur'd.

Osm. Grant me but life, good Heav'n, but length of days,
To pay ſome part, ſome little of this debt,
This countleſs ſum of tenderneſs and love,
For which I ſtand engag'd to this all-excellence:
Then bear me in a whirlwind to my fate,
Snatch me from life, and cut me ſhort unwarn'd;
Then, then 'twill be enough——I ſhall be old,
I ſhall have liv'd beyond all æra's then
Of yet unmeaſur'd time; when I have made
This exquiſite, this moſt amazing goodneſs,
Some recompence of love and matchleſs truth.

Alm. 'Tis more than recompence, to ſee thy face;
If heav'n is greater joy, it is no happineſs,
For 'tis not to be borne——What ſhall I ſay?
I have a thouſand things to know, and aſk,
And ſpeak——That thou art here, beyond all hope,
All thought; that all at once thou art before me,
And with ſuch ſuddenneſs haſt hit my ſight,

Is such surprize, such mystery, such ecstasy!
It hurries all my soul, and stuns my sense.
Sure from thy father's tomb thou didst arise.
Osm. I did; and thou, my love, didst call me; thou.
Alm. True; but how cam'st thou there? Wert thou [alone?
Osm. I was, and lying on my father's lead,
When broken echoes of a distant voice
Disturb'd the sacred silence of the vault,
In murmurs round my head. I rose and listned,
And thought I heard thy spirit call Alphonso;
I thought I saw thee too; but O, I thought not
That I indeed should be so blest to see thee———
Alm. But still, how cam'st thou hither? How thus?—Ha?
What's he, who like thyself is started here
Ere seen?
Osm. Where? ha! What do I see? Antonio?
I'm fortunate indeed——my friend too, safe!
Heli. Most happily, in finding you thus bless'd.
Alm. More miracles! Antonio too escap'd!
Osm. And twice escap'd, both from the rage of seas
And war: for in the fight I saw him fall.
Heli. But fell unhurt, a prisoner as yourself,
And as yourself made free; hither I came
Impatiently to seek you, where I knew
Your grief would lead you, to lament Anselmo.
Osm. There are no wonders, or else all is wonder.
Heli. I saw you on the ground, and rais'd you up:
When with astonishment, I saw Almeria.
Osm. I saw her too, and therefore saw not thee.
Alm. Nor I; nor could I, for my eyes were yours.
Osm. What means the bounty of all-gracious Heav'n,
That persevering still, with open hand,
It scatters good, as in a waste of mercy!
Where will this end! but Heav'n is infinite
In all, and can continue to bestow,
When scanty number shall be spent in telling.
Leon. Or I'm deceiv'd, or I beheld the glimpse
Of two in shining habits cross the isle;
Who by their pointing seem to mark this place.

Alm. Sure I have dream'd, if we muſt part ſo ſoon.
Oſm. I wiſh, at leaſt, our parting were a dream,
Or we could ſleep 'till we again were met.
Heli. Zara with Selim, Sir; I ſaw and know 'em:
You muſt be quick, for love will lend her wings.
Alm. What love? Who is ſhe? Why are you alarm'd?
Oſm. She's the reverſe of thee; ſhe's my unhappineſs.
Harbour no thought that may diſturb thy peace;
But gently take thyſelf away, leſt ſhe
Should come, and ſee the ſtraining of my eyes
To follow thee. I'll think how we may meet
To part no more. My friend will tell thee all;
How I eſcap'd, how I am here, and thus;
How I'm not call'd Alphonſo, now, but Oſmyn;
And he Heli. All, all he will unfold,
Ere next we meet———
Alm. Sure we ſhall meet again——
Oſm. We ſhall; we part not but to meet again.
Gladneſs and warmth of ever-kindling love
Dwell with thee, and revive thy heart in abſence.

SCENE VIII.

OSMYN *alone.*

Yet I behold her——yet——And now no more.
Turn your lights inward, eyes, and view my thought;
So ſhall you ſtill behold her———'twill not be.
O impotence of ſight! Mechanic ſenſe,
Which to exterior objects ow'ſt thy faculty,
Not ſeeing of election, but neceſſity.
Thus do our eyes, as do all common mirrours,
Succeſſively reflect ſucceeding images:
Not what they would, but muſt; a ſtar, or toad:
Not ſo the mind, whoſe undetermin'd view
Revolves, and to the preſent adds the paſt:
Eſſaying further to futurity;
But that in vain. I have Almeria here——
At once, as I before have ſeen her often——

SCENE IX.

ZARA, SELIM, OSMYN.

Zara. See where he ſtands, folded and fix'd to earth,
Stiff'ning in thought, a ſtatue among ſtatues.
Why, cruel Oſmyn, doſt thou fly me thus?
Is it well done? Is this then the return
For fame, for honour, and for empire loſt?
But what is loſs of honour, fame and empire!
Is this the recompence reſerv'd for love;
Why doſt thou leave my eyes, and fly my arms,
To find this place of horror and obſcurity?
Am I more loathſome to thee than the grave,
That thou doſt ſeek to ſhield thee there, and ſhun
My love? But to the grave I'll follow thee———
He looks not, minds not, hears not; barbarous man,
Am I neglected thus? Am I deſpiſed?
Not heard! ungrateful Oſmyn.

Oſm. Ha, 'tis Zara!

Zara. Yes, traitor; Zara, loſt, abandon'd Zara,
Is a regardleſs ſuppliant, now, to Oſmyn,
The ſlave, the wretch that ſhe redeem'd from death,
Diſdains to liſten now, or look on Zara.

Oſm. Far be the guilt of ſuch reproaches from me;
Loſt in myſelf, and blinded by my thoughts,
I ſaw you not, 'till now.

Zara. Now then you ſee———
But with ſuch dumb and thankleſs eyes you look,
Better I was unſeen, than ſeen thus coldly.

Oſm. What would you from a wretch that came to mourn,
And only for his ſorrows choſe this ſolitude?
Look round; joy is not here, nor chearfulneſs,
You have purſu'd misfortune to its dwelling,
Yet look for gaiety and gladneſs there.

Zara. Inhuman! why, why doſt thou rack me thus?
And with perverſeneſs, from the purpoſe anſwer?
What is't to me, this houſe of miſery?
What joy do I require? if thou doſt mourn,

I come to mourn with thee; to ſhare thy griefs,
And give thee, for 'em, in exchange my love.

Oſm. O that's the greateſt grief———I am ſo poor,
I have not wherewithal to give again.

Zara. Thou haſt a heart, tho' 'tis a ſavage one;
Give it me as it is; I aſk no more
For all I've done, and all I have endur'd:
For ſaving thee, when I beheld thee firſt,
Driven by the tide upon my country's coaſt,
Pale and expiring, drench'd in briny waves,
Thou and thy friend, 'till my compaſſion found thee;
Compaſſion! ſcarce will't own that name, ſo ſoon,
So quickly was it love; for thou wert god-like
Ev'n then. Kneeling on earth, I loos'd my hair,
And with it dry'd thy wat'ry cheeks; then chaf'd
Thy temples, 'till reviving blood aroſe,
And like the morn vermilion'd o'er thy face.
O Heav'n! how did my heart rejoice and ake,
When I beheld the day-break of thy eyes,
And felt the balm of thy reſpiring lips!

Oſm. O call not to my mind what you have done;
It ſets a debt of that account before me,
Which ſhews me poor, and bankrupt even in hopes.

Zara. The faithful Selim, and my women know
The dangers which I tempted to conceal you.
You know how I abus'd the credulous king;
What arts I us'd to make you paſs on him,
When he receiv'd you as the Prince of Fez;
And as my kinſman, honour'd and advanc'd you.
O, why do I relate what I have done?
What did I not? Was't not for you this war
Commenc'd? not knowing who you were, nor why
You hated Manuel, I urg'd my huſband
To this invaſion; where he late was loſt,
Where all is loſt, and I am made a ſlave.
Look on me now, from empire fall'n to ſlavery;
Think on my ſuff'rings firſt, then look on me;
Think on the cauſe of all, then view thyſelf:

Reflect on Osmyn, and then look on Zara,
The fall'n, the lost, and now the captive Zara,
And now abandon'd——say, what then is Osmyn?

Osm. A fatal wretch——a huge stupendous ruin,
That tumbling on its prop, crush'd all beneath,
And bore contiguous palaces to earth.

Zara. Yet thus, thus fall'n, thus levell'd with the vilest,
If I have gain'd thy love, 'tis glorious ruin;
Ruin! 'tis still to reign, and to be more
A queen; for what are riches, empire, power,
But larger means to gratify the will?
The steps on which we tread, to rise, and reach
Our wish; and that obtain'd, down with the scaffolding
Of sceptres, crowns, and thrones; they've serv'd their end,
And are, like lumber to be left and scorn'd.

Osm. Why was I made the instrument to throw
In bonds the frame of this exalted mind?

Zara. We may be free; the conqueror is mine;
In chains unseen I hold him by the heart,
And can unwind or strain him as I please.
Give me thy love, I'll give thee liberty.

Osm. In vain you offer, and in vain require
What neither can bestow: set free yourself,
And leave a slave the wretch that would be so.

Zara. Thou can'st not mean so poorly as thou talk'st.

Osm. Alas, you know me not.

Zara. Not who thou art:
But what this last ingratitude declares,
This groveling baseness——Thou say'st true, I know
Thee not, for what thou art yet wants a name:
But something so unworthy, and so vile,
That to have lov'd thee makes me yet more lost,
Than all the malice of my other fate.
Traitor, monster, cold and perfidious slave;
A slave, not daring to be free! nor dares
To love above him, for 'tis dangerous:
'Tis that I know; for thou dost look, with eyes
Sparkling desire, and trembling to possess.

I know my charms have reach'd thy very ſoul,
And thrill'd thee through with darted fires; but thou
Doſt fear ſo much, thou dar'ſt not wiſh. The King!
There, there's the dreadful ſound, the King's thy rival!

Sel. Madam, the King is here, and entering now.

Zara. As I could wiſh; by Heav'n I'll be reveng'd.

SCENE X.

ZARA, OSMYN, SELIM, *the* KING, PEREZ, *and Attendants.*

King. Why does the faireſt of her kind withdraw
Her ſhining from the day, to gild this ſcene
Of death and night? Ha! what diſorder's this?
Somewhat I heard of king and rival mention'd.
What's he that dares be rival to the King?
Or lift his eyes to like, where I adore?

Zara. There, he; your priſoner, and that was my ſlave.

King. How? Better than my hopes! does ſhe accuſe him? [*Aſide.*

Zara. Am I become ſo low by my captivity,
And do your arms ſo leſſen what they conquer,
That Zara muſt be made the ſport of ſlaves?
And ſhall the wretch, whom yeſter ſun beheld
Waiting my nod, the creature of my pow'r,
Preſume to-day to plead audacious love,
And build bold hopes on my dejected fate?

King. Better for him to tempt the rage of Heav'n,
And wrench the bolt red-hiſſing from the hand
Of him that thunders, than but think that inſolence.
'Tis daring for a God. Hence, to the wheel
With that Ixion, who aſpires to hold
Divinity embrac'd, to whips and priſons
Drag him with ſpeed, and rid me of his face.

[*Guards ſeize* Oſmyn.

Zara. Compaſſion led me to bemoan his ſtate,
Whoſe former faith had merited much more;
And through my hopes in you, I undertook

He ſhould be ſet at large; thence ſprung his inſolence,
And what was charity he conſtru'd love.

King. Enough; his puniſhment be what you pleaſe.
But let me lead you from this place of ſorrow,
To one, where young delights attend; and joys
Yet new, unborn, and blooming in the bud,
Which wait to be full-blown at your approach,
And ſpread like roſes to the morning ſun:
Where ev'ry hour ſhall roll in circling joys,
And love ſhall wing the tedious-waſting day:
Life without love is load; and time ſtands ſtill:
What we refuſe to him, to death we give;
And then, then only, when we love, we live.

ACT III. SCENE I.

A PRISON.

OSMYN *alone, with a paper.*

BUT now, and I was clos'd within the tomb
That holds my father's aſhes; and but now,
Where he was pris'ner, I am too impriſon'd.
Sure 'tis the hand of Heav'n that leads me thus,
And for ſome purpoſe points out theſe remembrances.
In a dark corner of my cell I found
This paper, what it is this light will ſhow.
" If my Alphonſo"——Ha! [*Reading.*
" If my Alphonſo live, reſtore him, Heav'n;
" Give me more weight, cruſh my declining years
" With bolts, with chains, impriſonment and want;
" But bleſs my ſon, viſit not him for me."
It is his hand; this was his prayer—yet more:
" Let ev'ry hair, which ſorrow by the roots [*Reading.*
" Tears from my hoary and devoted head,
" Be doubled in thy mercies to my ſon:
" Not for myſelf, but him, hear me, all-gracious"——
'Tis wanting what ſhould follow—Heav'n ſhould follow,
But 'tis torn off—Why ſhould that word alone

Be torn from his petition? 'Twas to Heav'n,
But Heav'n was deaf, Heav'n heard him not; but thus,
Thus as the name of Heav'n from this is torn,
So did it tear the ears of mercy from
His voice, ſhutting the gates of pray'r againſt him.
If piety be thus debarr'd acceſs
On high, and of good men the very beſt
Is fingled out to bleed, and bear the ſcourge,
What is reward? or what is puniſhment?
But who ſhall dare to tax eternal juſtice!
Yet I may think——I may, I muſt; for thought
Precedes the will to think, and error lives
Ere reaſon can be born. Reaſon, the power
To gueſs at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp
Of wand'ring life, that winks by turns,
Fooling the follower, betwixt ſhade and ſhining.
What noiſe! Who's there? My friend! How com'ſt thou
hither?

SCENE II.

OSMYN, HELI.

Heli. The time's too precious to be ſpent in telling;
The captain, influenc'd by Almeria's power,
Gave order to the guards for my admittance.

Oſm. How does Almeria? But I know ſhe is
As I am. Tell me, may I hope to ſee her?

Heli. You may: anon, at midnight when the King
Is gone to reſt, and Garcia is retir'd,
(Who takes the privilege to viſit late,
Preſuming on a bridegroom's right) ſhe'll come.

Oſm. She'll come! 'tis what I wiſh, yet what I fear.
She'll come! but whither, and to whom? O Heav'n!
To a vile priſon, and a captiv'd wretch;
To one, whom had ſhe never known, ſhe had
Been happy: Why, why was that heav'nly creature
Abandon'd o'er to love what Heav'n forſakes?
Why does ſhe follow, with unwearied ſteps,

One who has tir'd misfortune with pursuing?
One, driven about the world like blasted leaves
And chaff, the sport of adverse winds; 'till late
At length, imprison'd in some cleft of rock,
Or earth, it rests, and rots to silent dust.

Heli. Have hopes, and hear the voice of better fate.
I've learn'd there are disorders ripe for mutiny
Among the troops, who thought to share the plunder,
Which Manuel to his own use and avarice
Converts. This news has reach'd Valentia's frontiers;
Where many of your subjects, long oppress'd
With tyranny and grievous impositions,
Are risen in arms, and call for chiefs to head
And lead them to regain their rights and liberty.

Osm. By Heav'n thou'st rous'd me from my lethargy.
The spirit which was deaf to my own wrongs,
And the loud cries of my dead father's blood;
Deaf to revenge——nay, which refus'd to hear
The piercing sighs and murmurs of my love
Yet unenjoy'd; what not Almeria could
Revive, or raise, my people's voice has waken'd.
O my Antonio, I am all on fire,
My soul is up in arms, ready to charge
And bear amidst the foe, with conqu'ring troops.
I hear 'em call to lead 'em on to liberty,
To victory; their shouts and clamours rend
My ears, and reach the heav'n: where is the King?
Where is Alphonso? ha! Where, where indeed?
O I could tear and burst the strings of life,
To break these chains. Off, off, ye stains of royalty,
Off, slavery. O curse! that I alone
Can beat and flutter in my cage, when I
Would soar and stoop at victory beneath.

Heli. Our posture of affairs, and scanty time,
My Lord, require you should compose yourself,
And think on what we may reduce to practice.
Zara, the cause of your restraint, may be
The means of liberty restor'd. That gain'd,
Occasion will not fail to point out ways

For your escape. Mean time, I've thought already
With speed and safety to convey myself
Where not far off some malecontents hold council
Nightly; who hate this tyrant; some, who love
Anselmo's memory, and will, for certain,
When they shall know you live, assist your cause.

Osm. My friend and counsellor, as thou think'st fit,
So do. I will with patience wait my fortune.

Heli. When Zara comes, abate of your aversion.

Osm. I hate her not, nor can dissemble love:
But as I may, I'll do. I have a paper
Which I would shew thee, friend, but that the sight
Would hold thee here, and clog thy expedition.
Within I found it, by my father's hand
'Twas writ; a pray'r for me, wherein appears
Paternal love prevailing o'er his sorrows;
Such sanctity, such tenderness so mix'd
With grief as would draw tears from inhumanity.

Heli. The care of Providence sure left it there,
To arm your mind with hope. Such piety
Was never heard in vain: Heav'n has in store
For you those blessings it with-held from him.
In that assurance live: which time, I hope,
And our next meeting will confirm.

Osm. Farewel,
My friend; the good thou dost deserve attend thee.

SCENE III.

OSMYN *alone.*

I've been to blame, and question'd with impiety
The care of Heav'n. Not so my father bore
More anxious grief. This should have better taught me:
This lesson, in some hour of inspiration,
By him set down; when his pure thoughts were born,
Like fumes of sacred incense, o'er the clouds,
And wafted thence, on angels wings, thro' ways
Of light, to the bright source of all. For there
He in the book of prescience saw this day;

And waking, to the world, and mortal ſenſe,
Left this example of his reſignation,
This his laſt legacy to me, which, here,
I'll treaſure as more worth than diadems,
Or all extended rule of regal pow'r.

SCENE IV.

OSMYN, ZARA *veiled.*

Oſm. What brightneſs breaks upon me thus thro' ſhades,
And promiſes a day to this dark dwelling?
Is it my love?——

Zara. O that thy heart had taught [*Lifting her veil.*
Thy tongue that ſaying.

Oſm. Zara! I am betray'd
By my ſurprize. [*Aſide.*

Zara. What, does my face diſpleaſe thee?
That having ſeen it, thou doſt turn thy eyes
Away, as from deformity and horror.
If ſo, this fable curtain ſhall again
Be drawn, and I will ſtand before thee ſeeing,
And unſeen. Is it my love? aſk again
That queſtion, ſpeak again in that ſoft voice,
And look again with wiſhes in thy eyes.
O no, thou canſt not, for thou ſee'ſt me now,
As ſhe whoſe ſavage breaſt has been the cauſe
Of theſe thy wrongs; as ſhe whoſe barbarous rage
Has loaded thee with chains and galling irons:
Well doſt thou ſcorn me, and upbraid my falſeneſs:
Could one who lov'd, thus torture whom ſhe lov'd?
No, no, it muſt be hatred, dire revenge,
And deteſtation, that could uſe thee thus.
So thou doſt think; then do but tell me ſo;
Tell me, and thou ſhalt ſee how I'll revenge
Thee on this falſe one, how I'll ſtab and tear
This heart of flint 'till it ſhall bleed; and thou
Shalt weep for mine, forgetting thy own miſeries.

Oſm. You wrong me, beauteous Zara, to believe
I bear my fortunes with ſo low a mind,

As ſtill to meditate revenge on all
Whom chance, or fate, working by ſecret cauſes,
Has made perforce ſubſervient to that end
The heav'nly pow'rs allot me; no, not you,
But deſtiny and inauſpicious ſtars
Have caſt me down to this low being: or,
Granting you had, from you I have deſerv'd it.

Zara. Can'ſt thou forgive me then? wilt thou believe
So kindly of my fault, to call it madneſs?
O, give that madneſs yet a milder name,
And call it paſſion; then, be ſtill more kind,
And call that paſſion love.

Oſm. Give it a name,
Or being as you pleaſe, ſuch I will think it.

Zara. O thou doſt wound me more with this thy good-neſs,
Than e'er thou could'ſt with bittereſt reproaches;
Thy anger could not pierce thus to my heart.

Oſm. Yet I could wiſh——

Zara. Haſte me to know it: what?

Oſm. That at this time I had not been this thing.

Zara. What thing?

Oſm. This ſlave.

Zara. O Heav'n! my fears interpret
This thy ſilence: ſomewhat of high concern,
Long faſhioning within thy labouring mind,
And now juſt ripe for birth, my rage has ruin'd:
Have I done this? Tell me, am I ſo curs'd?

Oſm. Time may have ſtill one fated hour to come,
Which, wing'd with liberty, might overtake
Occaſion paſt.

Zara. Swift as occaſion, I
Myſelf will fly; and earlier than the morn
Wake thee to freedom. Now 'tis late; and yet
Some news few minutes paſt arriv'd which ſeem'd
To ſhake the temper of the king—Who knows
What racking cares diſeaſe a monarch's bed?
Or love, that late at night ſtill lights his lamp,
And ſtrikes his rays thro' duſk, and folded lids,
Forbidding reſt, may ſtretch his eyes awake,

And force their balls abroad at this dead hour.
I'll try.

Osm. I have not merited this grace;
Nor, shou'd my secret purpose take effect,
Can I repay, as you require, such benefit.

Zara. Thou can'st not owe me more, nor have I more
To give, than I've already lost. But now,
So does the form of our engagements rest,
Thou hast the wrong, 'till I redeem thee hence;
That done, I leave thy justice to return.
My love. Adieu.

SCENE V.

OSMYN, *alone.*

This woman has a soul
Of godlike mould, intrepid and commanding,
And challenges, in spite of me, my best
Esteem; to this she's fair, few more can boast
Of personal charms, or with less vanity
Might hope to captivate the heart of kings.
But she has passions which out-strip the wind,
And tear her virtues up, as tempests root
The sea. I fear when she shall know the truth,
Some swift and dire event of her blind rage
Will make all fatal. But behold she comes
For whom I fear, to shield me from my fears,
The cause and comfort of my boding heart.

SCENE VI.

ALMERIA. OSMYN.

Osm. My life, my health, my liberty, my all!
How shall I welcome thee to this sad place?
How speak to thee the words of joy and transport?
How run into thy arms witheld by fetters;
Or take thee into mine, while I'm thus manacled:
And pinion'd like a thief or murderer?
Shall I not hurt or bruise thy tender body,
And stain thy body with the rust of these
Rude irons? must I meet thee thus, Almeria?

Alm. Thus, thus; we parted, thus to meet again.
Thou told'ſt me thou would'ſt think how we might meet
To part no more——Now we will part no more;
For theſe thy chains, or death, ſhall join us ever.
Oſm. Hard means to ratify that word!—O cruelty,
That ever I ſhould think beholding thee
A torture!—Yet, ſuch is the bleeding anguiſh
Of my heart, to ſee thy ſufferings——O heav'n!
That I could almoſt turn my eyes away,
Or wiſh thee from my ſight.
Alm. O, ſay not ſo;
Tho' 'tis becauſe thou lov'ſt me. Do not ſay,
On any terms, that thou doſt wiſh me from thee.
No, no, 'tis better thus, that we together
Feed on each other's heart, devour our woes
With mutual appetite; and mingling in
One cup the common ſtream of both our eyes,
Drink bitter draughts, with never-ſlacking thirſt,
Thus better, than for any cauſe to part.
What doſt thou think? Look not ſo tenderly
Upon me——ſpeak, and take me in thy arms——.
Thou canſt not! thy poor arms are bound, and ſtrive
In vain with the remorſeleſs chains which gnaw
And eat into thy fleſh, feſtring thy limbs
With rankling ruſt.
Oſm. Oh! O——
Alm. Give me that ſigh.
Why doſt thou heave, and ſtifle in thy griefs?
Thy heart will burſt, thy eyes look red and ſtart;
Give thy ſoul way, and tell me thy dark thought.
Oſm. For this world's rule, I wou'd not wound thy breaſt
With ſuch a dagger as then ſtuck my heart.
Alm. Why? why? to know it cannot wound me more,
Than knowing thou haſt felt it. Tell it me.
——Thou giv'ſt me pain with too much tenderneſs.
Oſm. And thy exceſſive love diſtracts my ſenſe!
O would'ſt thou be leſs killing, ſoft or kind,
Grief cou'd not double thus his darts againſt me.
Alm. Thou doſt me wrong, and grief too robs my heart,

If there he ſhoot not every other ſhaft;
Thy ſecond ſelf ſhou'd feel each other wound,
And woe ſhou'd be in equal portions dealt.
I am thy wife———

Oſm. O thou haſt ſcarch'd too deep;
There, there I bleed; there pull the cruel cords,
That ſtrain my cracking nerves; engines and wheels,
That piece-meal grind, are beds of down and balm
To that ſoul-racking thought.

Alm. Then I am curs'd
Indeed, if that be ſo; if I'm thy torment,
Kill me, then kill me, daſh me with thy chains,
Tread on me; what, am I thy boſom-ſnake,
That ſucks thy life-warm blood, and gnaws thy heart?
O that thy words had ſtrength to break theſe bonds,
As they have ſtrength to tear this heart aſunder;
So ſhould'ſt thou be at large from all oppreſſion.
Am I, am I of all thy woes the worſt?

Oſm. My all of bliſs, my everlaſting life,
Soul of my ſoul, and end of all my wiſhes,
Why doſt thou thus unman me with thy words,
And melt me down to mingle with thy weepings?
Why doſt thou aſk? Why doſt thou talk thus piercingly?
Thy ſorrows have diſturb'd thy peace of mind,
And thou doſt ſpeak of miſeries impoſſible.

Alm. Didſt thou not ſay, that racks and wheels were
And beds of eaſe, to thinking me thy wife? [balm,

Oſm. No, no; nor ſhou'd the ſubtleſt pains that hell,
Or hell-born malice can invent, extort
A wiſh or thought from me, to have thee other.
But thou wilt know what harrows up my heart:
Thou art my wife——nay, thou art yet my bride!
The ſacred union of connubial love
Yet unaccompliſh'd; his myſterious rites
Delay'd; nor has our Hymeneal torch
Yet lighted up his laſt moſt grateful ſacrifice;
But daſh'd with rain from eyes, and ſwell'd with ſighs,
Burns dim, and glimmers with expiring light.
Is this dark cell a temple for that god?

Or this vile earth an altar for such off'rings?
This den for slaves, this dungeon damp'd with woes;
Is this our marriage-bed? Are these our joys?
Is this to call thee mine? Oh, hold my heart!
To call thee mine? Yes; thus, even thus to call
Thee mine, were comfort, joy, extremest ecstasy.
But O, thou art not mine, not even in misery;
And 'tis deny'd to me to be so bless'd,
As to be wretched with thee.

Alm. No; not that
The extremest malice of our fate can hinder:
That still is left us, and on that we'll feed,
As on the leavings of calamity.
There we will feast, and smile on past distress,
And hug, in scorn of it, our mutual ruin.

Osm. O thou dost talk, my love, as one resolv'd
Because not knowing danger. But look forward;
Think on to-morrow, when thou shalt be torn
From these weak, struggling unextended arms;
Think how my heart will heave, and eyes will strain,
To grasp and reach what is deny'd my hands;
Think how the blood will start, and tears will gush
To follow thee, my separating soul.
Think how I am, when thou shalt wed with Garcia!
Then will I smear these walls with blood, disfigure
And dash my face, and rive my clotted hair,
Break on the flinty floor my throbbing breast,
And grovel with gash'd hands to scratch a grave,
Stripping my nails, to tear this pavement up,
And bury me alive

Alm. Heart-breaking horror!

Osm. Then Garcia shall ly panting on thy bosom,
Luxurious revelling amidst thy charms;
And thou perforce must yield, and aid his transport.
Hell! hell! have I not cause to rage and rave?
What are all racks, and wheels, and whips to this?
Are they not soothing softness, sinking ease,
And wasting air to this! O my Almeria?
What do the damn'd endure, but to despair,

But knowing Heaven, to know it loſt for ever?

Alm. O, I am ſtruck; thy words are bolts of ice,
Which ſhot into my breaſt, now melt and chill me.
I chatter, ſhake, and faint, with thrilling fears.
No, hold me not—— O let us not ſupport,
But ſink each other, deeper yet, down, down,
Where level'd low, no more we'll lift our eyes,
But prone, and dumb, rot the firm face of earth
With rivers of inceſſant ſcalding rain.

SCENE VII.

ZARA, PEREZ, SELIM, OSMYN, ALMERIA.

Zara. Somewhat of weight to me requires his freedom,
Dare you diſpute the king's command? Behold
The Royal ſignet.

Per. I obey; yet beg
Your Majeſty one moment to defer
Your entering, 'till the princeſs is return'd
From viſiting the noble priſoner.

Zara. Ha!
What ſay ſt thou?

Oſm. We are loſt! undone! diſcover'd!
Retire, my life, with ſpeed——Alas, we're ſeen:
Speak of compaſſion, let her hear you ſpeak
Of interceding for me with the king?
Say ſomewhat quickly to conceal our loves,
If poſſible——

Alm. ——I cannot ſpeak.

Oſm. Let me
Conduct you forth, as not perceiving her,
But 'till ſhe's gone; then bleſs me thus again.

Zara. Trembling and weeping as he leads her forth!
Confuſion in his face, and grief in hers!
'Tis plain I've been abus'd——Death and deſtruction!
How ſhall I ſearch into this myſtery?
The blueſt blaſt of peſtilential air
Strike, damp, deaden her charms, and kill his eyes;
Perdition catch 'em both, and ruin part 'em.

Osm. This charity to one unknown, and thus
[*Aloud to* Almeria *as she goes out.*
Distress'd, Heav'n will repay; all thanks are poor.

SCENE VIII.

ZARA, SELIM, OSMYN.

Zara. Damn'd, damn'd dissembler! yet I will be calm,
Choke in my rage, and know the utmost depth
Of this deceiver——you seem much surprized.
Osm. At your return so soon and unexpected!
Zara. And so unwish'd, unwanted too it seems.
Confusion! yet I will contain myself.
You're grown a favourite since last we parted;
Perhaps I'm saucy and intruding——
Osm. ——Madam!
Zara. I did not know the Princess' favourite;
Your pardon, Sir—mistake me not; you think
I'm angry; you're deceiv'd. I came to set
You free: but shall return much better pleas'd,
To find you have an interest superior.
Osm. You do not come to mock my miseries?
Zara. I do.
Osm. I could at this time spare your mirth.
Zara. I know thou cou'dst: but I'm not often pleas'd,
And will indulge it now. What miseries?
Who wou'd not be thus happily confin'd,
To be the care of weeping Majesty?
To have contending queens, at dead of night,
Forsake their down, to wake with watry eyes,
And watch like tapers o'er your hours of rest?
O curse! I cannot hold——
Osm. Come, 'tis too much.
Zara. Villain!
Osm. How, Madam!
Zara. Thou shalt die.
Osm. I thank you.
Zara. Thou liest; for now I know for whom thou'd'st live.
Osm. Then you may know for whom I'd die.

Zara. Hell! Hell!
Yet I'll be calm—Dark and unknown betrayer!
But now the dawn begins, and the slow hand
Of fate is stretch'd to draw the veil, and leave
Thee bare, the naked mark of public view.
Osm. You may be still deceiv'd, 'tis in my power——
Zara. Who waits there? As you'll answer it, look this slave [*To the Guard.*
Attempt no means to make himself away.
I've been deceiv'd. The public safety now
Requires he should be more confin'd, and none,
No, not the princess, suffer'd or to see,
Or speak with him: I'll quit you to the king.
Vile and ingrate! too late thou shalt repent
The base injustice thou hast done my love:
Yes, thou shalt know, spite of thy past distress,
And all those ills which thou so long hast mourn'd;
Heav'n has no rage, like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury, like a woman scorn'd.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Room of State.

ZARA, SELIM.

ZARA.

THOU hast already rack'd me with thy stay;
Therefore require me not to ask thee twice;
Reply at once to all. What is concluded?
Sel. Your accusation highly has incens'd
The king, and were alone enough to urge
The fate of Osmyn; but to that, fresh news
Is since arriv'd, of more revolted troops.
'Tis certain Heli too is fled, and with him
(Which breeds amazement and distraction) some
Who bore high offices of weight and trust,
Both in the state and army. This confirms

The king, in full belief of all you told him,
Concerning Oſmyn and his correſpondence
With them who firſt began the mutiny.
Wherefore a warrant for his death is ſign'd,
And order given for public execution.

Zara. Ha! haſte thee! fly, prevent his fate and mine:
Find out the king, tell him I have of weight
More than his crown t'impart ere Oſmyn die.

Sel. It needs not, for the king will ſtraight be here;
And as to your revenge, not his own intereſt,
Pretend to ſacrifice the life of Oſmyn.

Zara. What ſhall I ſay? Invent, contrive, adviſe,
Somewhat to blind the king, and ſave his life
In whom I live. Spite of my rage and pride,
I am a woman, and a lover ſtill.
O, 'tis more grief but to ſuppoſe his death,
Than ſtill to meet the rigour of his ſcorn.
From my deſpair my anger had its ſource;
When he is dead I muſt deſpair for ever.
For ever! that's deſpair—it was diſtruſt
Before: diſtruſt will ever be in love,
And anger in diſtruſt, both ſhort-liv'd pains.
But in deſpair, and ever-during death,
No term, no bound, but infinite of woe.
O torment, but to think! what then to bear?
Not to be borne——deviſe the means to ſhun it,
Quick, or by Heav'n this dagger drinks thy blood.

Sel. My life is yours, nor wiſh I to preſerve it,
But to ſerve you. I have already thought.

Zara. Forgive my rage; I know thy love and truth.
But ſay, what's to be done? or when, or how,
Shall I prevent, or ſtop th' approaching danger?

Sel. You muſt ſtill ſeem moſt reſolute and fix'd
On Oſmyn's death; too quick a change for mercy
Might breed ſuſpicion of the cauſe. Adviſe
That execution may be done in private.

Zara. On what pretence?

Sel. Your own requeſt's enough.
However, for a colour, tell him, you

Have cauſe to fear his guards may be corrupted,
And ſome of them bought off to Oſmyn's intereſt,
Who, at the place of execution, will
Attempt to force his way for an eſcape.
The ſtate of things will countenance all ſuſpicions.
Then offer to the king to have him ſtrangled
In ſecret by your mutes, and get an order,
That none but mutes may have admittance to him.
I can no more, the King is here. Obtain
This grant——and I'll acquaint you with the reſt.

SCENE II.

KING, GONSALEZ, PEREZ, ZARA, SELIM.

King. Bear to the dungeon thoſe rebellious ſlaves,
Th' ignoble curs, that help to fill the cry,
And ſpend their mouths in barking tyranny.
But for their leaders, Sancho and Ramirez,
Let 'em be led away to preſent death.

Per. See it perform'd.

Gon. Might I preſume,
Their execution better were deferr'd
Till Oſmyn die. Meantime we may learn more
Of this conſpiracy.

King. Then be it ſo.
Stay, ſoldier; they ſhall ſuffer with the Moor.
Are none return'd of thoſe who follow'd Heli?

Gon. None, Sir. Some papers have been ſince diſcover'd
In Roderigo's houſe, who fled with him,
Which ſeem to intimate, as if Alphonſo
Were ſtill alive, and arming in Valentia:
Which wears indeed this colour of a truth,
They who are fled have that way bent their courſe.
Of the ſame nature divers notes have been
Diſpers'd t' amuſe the people; whereupon
Some ready of belief have rais'd this rumour;
That being ſav'd upon the coaſt of Afric,
He there diſclos'd himſelf to Albucacim,
And by a ſecret compact made with him,

Open'd and urg'd the way to this invaſion;
While he himſelf returning to Valentia
In private, undertook to raiſe this tumult.
Zara. Ha! hear'ſt thou that? Is Oſmyn then Alphonſo!
O Heav'n! a thouſand things occur at once
To my remembrance now, that makes it plain.
O certain death for him, as ſure deſpair
For me, if it be known——If not, what hope
Have I? Yet 'twere the loweſt baſeneſs, now
To yield him up——No, I will ſtill conceal him,
And try the force of yet more obligations.
Gon. 'Tis not impoſſible. Yet, it may be
That ſome impoſtor has uſurp'd his name.
Your beauteous captive Zara can inform,
If ſuch a one, ſo 'ſcaping, was receiv'd,
At any time' in Albucacim's court.
King. Pardon, fair excellence, this long neglect:
An unforeſeen, unwelcome hour of buſineſs,
Has thruſt between us and our while of love;
But wearing now apace with ebbing ſand,
Will quickly waſte, and give again the day.
Zara. You're too ſecure; the danger is more imminent
Than your high courage ſuffers you to ſee;
While Oſmyn lives, you are not ſafe.
King. His doom
Is paſs'd; if you revoke it not, he dies.
Zara. 'Tis well. By what I heard upon your entrance,
I find I can unfold what yet concerns
You more. One who did call himſelf Alphonſo
Was caſt upon my coaſt, as is reported,
And oft had private conference with the King;
To what effect I knew not then but he,
Alphonſo, ſecretly departed, juſt
About the time our arms embark'd for Spain.
What I know more is, that a triple league
Of ſtricteſt friendſhip, was profeſs'd between
Alphonſo, Heli, and the traitor Oſmyn.
King. Public report is ratified in this.

Zara. And Osmyn's death requir'd of strong necessity.
King. Give order straight that all the pris'ners die.
Zara. Forbear a moment; somewhat more I have
Worthy your private ear, and this your minister.
King. Let all except Gonsalez leave the room.

SCENE III.

KING, GONSALEZ, ZARA, SELIM.

Zara. I am your captive, and you've us'd me nobly;
And in return of that, tho' otherwise
Your enemy, I have discover'd Osmyn
His private practice and conspiracy
Against your state: and fully to discharge
Myself of what I've undertaken, now
I think it fit to tell you, that your guards
Are tainted: some among 'em have resolv'd
To rescue Osmyn at the place of death.
King. Is treason then so near us as our guards!
Zara. Most certain; tho' my knowledge is not yet
So ripe, to point at the particular men.
King. What's to be done?
Zara. That too I will advise.
I have remaining in my train some mutes,
A present once from the Sultana queen,
In the Grand Seignior's court. These, from their infancy
Are practis'd in the trade of death; and shall
(As there the custom is) in private strangle
Osmyn.
Gon. My Lord, the Queen advises well.
King. What off'ring, or what recompence remains
In me, that can be worthy so great services?
To cast beneath your feet the crown you've sav'd,
Tho' on the head that wears it, were too little.
Zara. Of that hereafter; but, mean time, 'tis fit
You give strict charge, that none may be admitted
To see the pris'ner, but such mutes as I
Shall send.
King. Who waits there?

SCENE IV.

KING, GONSALEZ, ZARA, SELIM, PEREZ.

King. On your life take heed,
That only Zara's mutes, or such who bring
Her warrant, have admittance to the Moor.

Zara. They and no other, not the Princess' self.

Per. Your Majesty shall be obey'd.

King. Retire.

SCENE V.

KING, GONSALEZ, ZARA, SELIM.

Gon. That interdiction so particular,
Pronounc'd with vehemence against the Princess,
Shou'd have more meaning than appears barefac'd.
The King is blinded by his love, and heeds
It not.———Your Majesty sure might have spar'd
That last restraint; you hardly can suspect
The Princess is confederate with the Moor.

Zara. I've heard, her charity did once extend
So far, to visit him, at his request.

Gon. Ha!

King. How? She visit Osmyn! What, my daughter?

Sel. Madam, take heed; or you have ruin'd all.

Zara. And after did sollicit you on his
Behalf.

King. Never. You have been misinform'd.

Zara. Indeed? Then 'twas a whisper spread by some,
Who wish'd it so; a common art in courts.
I will retire, and instantly prepare
Instruction for my ministers of death.

SCENE VI.

KING, GONSALEZ.

Gon. There's somewhat yet of mystery in this;
Her words and actions are obscure and double,
Sometimes concur, and sometimes disagree;
I like it not.

King. What doſt thou think, Gonſalez?
Are we not much indebted to this fair one?

Gon. I am a little ſlow of credit, Sir,
In the ſincerity of women's actions.
Methinks this Lady's hatred to the Moor
Diſquiets her too much; which makes it ſeem
As if ſhe'd rather that ſhe did not hate him.
I wiſh her mutes are meant to be employ'd
As ſhe pretends——I doubt it now——Your guards
Corrupted! how? by whom? who told her ſo?
I'th' evening Oſmyn was to die; at midnight
She begg'd the royal ſignet to releaſe him;
I'th' morning he muſt die again; ere noon
Her mutes alone muſt ſtrangle him, or he'll
Eſcape. This put together ſuits not well.

King. Yet, that there's truth in what ſhe has diſcover'd,
Is manifeſt from every circumſtance.
This tumult, and the Lords who fled with Heli,
Are confirmation——that Alphonſo lives,
Agrees expreſly too with her report.

Gon. I grant it, Sir; and doubt not, but in rage
Of jealouſy, ſhe has diſcover'd what
She now repents. It may be I'm deceiv'd.
But why that needleſs caution of the Princeſs?
What if ſhe had ſeen Oſmyn? tho' 'twere ſtrange.
But if ſhe had, what was't to her? unleſs
She fear'd her ſtronger charms might cauſe the Moor's
Affection to revolt.

King. I thank thee, friend.
There's reaſon in thy doubt, and I am warn'd.
But think'ſt thou that my daughter ſaw this Moor?

Gon. If Oſmyn be, as Zara has related,
Alphonſo's friend; 'tis not impoſſible,
But ſhe might wiſh on his account to ſee him.

King. Say'ſt thou? By Heaven thou haſt rous'd a thought,
That like a ſudden earthquake ſhakes my frame;
Confuſion! then my daughter's an accomplice,
And plots in private with this helliſh Moor.

Gon. That were too hard a thought—but see she comes:
'Twere not amiss to question her a little,
And try how'er, if I have divin'd aright.
If what I fear be true, she'll be concern'd
For Osmyn's death, as he's Alphonso's friend.
Urge that, to try if she'll solicit for him.

SCENE VII.

KING, GONSALEZ, ALMERIA, LEONORA.

King. Your coming has prevented me, Almeria;
I had determin'd to have sent for you.
Let your attendant be dismiss'd; I have [Leonora *retires.*
To talk with you. Come near; why dost thou shake?
What mean those swollen and red-fleck'd eyes, that look
As they had wept in blood, and worn the night
In waking anguish? Why this, on the day
Which was design'd to celebrate thy nuptials;
But that the beams of light are to be stain'd
With reeking gore, from traitors on the rack?
Wherefore I have deferr'd the marriage rites;
Nor shall the guilty horrors of this day
Prophane that jubilee.

Alm. All days to me
Henceforth are equal; this the day of death,
To-morrow, and the next, and each that follows,
Will undistinguish'd roll, and but prolong
One hated line of more extended woe.

King. Whence is thy grief? give me to know the cause,
And look thou answer me with truth; for know,
I am not unacquainted with thy falsehood.
Why art thou mute? base and degenerate maid!

Gon. Dear Madam, speak, or you'll incense the King.

Alm. What is't to speak? or wherefore shou'd I speak?
What mean these tears, but grief unutterable!

King. They are the dumb confessions of thy mind;
They mean thy guilt; and say thou wert confed'rate
With damn'd conspirators to take my life.
O impious parricide! now can'st thou speak?

Alm. O earth, behold, I kneel upon thy boſom,
And bend my flowing eyes, to ſtream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield;
Open thy bowels of compaſſion, take
Into thy womb the laſt and moſt forlorn
Of all thy race. Hear me, thou common parent;
——I have no parent elſe——be thou a mother,
And ſtep between me and the curſe of him,
Who was——who was, but is no more a father,
But brands my innocence with horrid crimes;
And for the tender names of child and daughter,
Now calls me murderer and parricide.

King. Riſe, I command thee riſe——and if thou woud'ſt
Acquit thyſelf of thoſe deteſted names,
Swear thou haſt never ſeen that foreign dog,
Now doom'd to die, that moſt accurſed Oſmyn.

Alm. Never, but as with innocence I might,
And free of all bad purpoſes. So Heaven's
My witneſs.

King. Vile equivocating wretch!
With innocence! O patience! hear——ſhe owns it!
Confeſſes it! by Heaven I'll have him rack'd,
Torn, mangled, flay'd, impal'd——all pains and tortures
That wit of man and dire revenge can think,
Shall be accumulated under-bear.

Alm. Oh, I'm loſt——there fate begins to wound.

King. Hear me, then; if thou can'ſt, reply; know,
I'm not to learn that curs'd Alphonſo lives; [traitreſs,
Nor am I ignorant what Oſmyn is.

Alm. Then all is ended, and we both muſt die.
Since thou'rt reveal'd, alone thou ſhalt not die.
And yet alone wou'd I have died, Heaven knows,
Repeated deaths, rather than have reveal'd thee.
Yes, all my father's wounded wrath, tho' each
Reproach cuts deeper than the keeneſt ſword,
And cleaves my heart; I wou'd have born it all,
Nay, all the pains that are prepar'd for thee:
To the remorſeleſs rack I wou'd have given

This weak and tender flesh, to have been bruis'd
And torn, rather than have reveal'd thy being.

King. Hell, hell! do I hear this, and yet endure!
What, dar'st thou to my face avow thy guilt?
Hence, ere I curse——fly my just rage with speed;
Lest I forget us both, and spurn thee from me.

Alm. And yet a father! think I am your child.
Turn not your eyes away——look on me kneeling;
Now curse me if you can, now spurn me off.
Did ever father curse his kneeling child!
Never; for always blessings crown that posture.
Nature inclines, and half-way meets that duty,
Stooping to raise from earth the filial reverence;
For bended knees returning folding arms,
With pray'rs, and blessings, and paternal love.
O hear me then, thus crawling on the earth——

King. Be thou advis'd, and let me go, while yet
The light impression thou hast made remains.

Alm. No, never will I rise, nor loose this hold,
'Till you are mov'd, and grant that he may live.

King. Ha! who may live? take heed, no more of that;
For on my soul he dies, tho' thou and I,
And all thou'd follow to partake his doom.
Away, off, let me go.——Call her attendants.

[Leonora *and women return.*

Alm. Drag me, harrow the earth with my bare bosom,
I'll not let go 'till you have spar'd my husband.

King. Ha! what say'st thou? Husband! husband!
What husband? which? who! [damnation!

Alm. He is my husband.

King. Poison and daggers! who?

Alm. O——

Conf. Help, support her.

Alm. Let me go, let me fall, sink deep——I'll dig,
I'll dig a grave, and tear up death; I will;
I'll scrape 'till I collect his rotten bones,
And clothe their nakedness with my own flesh:
Yes, I will strip off life, and we will change:

I will be death; then tho' you kill my husband,
He shall be mine, still and for ever mine.

King. What husband? who? whom dost thou mean?

Gonsf. She raves!

Alm. O that I did. Osmyn, he is my husband.

King. Osmyn?

Alm. Not Osmyn, but Alphonso is my dear
And wedded husband———Heav'n, and air, and seas,
Ye winds and waves, I call ye all to witness.

King. Wilder than winds or waves thyself dost rave.
Shou'd I hear more, I too shou'd catch thy madness.
Yet somewhat she must mean of dire import,
Which I'll not hear, 'till I am more at peace.
Watch her returning sense, and bring me word;
And look that she attempt not on her life.

SCENE VIII.

ALMERIA, GONSALEZ, LEONORA, *Attendants.*

Alm. O stay, yet stay; hear me, I am not mad.
I wou'd to Heaven I were—He's gone.

Gonsf. Have comfort.

Alm. Curs'd be that tongue that bids me be of comfort;
Curs'd my own tongue, that cou'd not move his pity;
Curs'd these weak hands that cou'd not hold him here;
For he is gone to doom Alphonso's death.

Gonsf. Your too excessive grief works on your fancy,
And deludes your sense. Alphonso, if living,
Is far from hence, beyond your father's power.

Alm. Hence, thou detested, ill-tim'd flatterer;
Source of my woes: thou and thy race be curs'd;
But doubly thou, who could alone have policy
And fraud, to find the fatal secret out,
And know that Osmyn was Alphonso.

Gonsf. Ha!

Alm. Why dost thou start! what dost thou see or hear?
Was it the doleful bell, tolling for death?
Or dying groans from my Alphonso's breast?

See, see, look yonder! where a grizzled, pale,
And ghaſtly head glares by, all ſmear'd with blood,
Gaſping as it wou'd ſpeak; and after, ſee!
Behold a damp, dead hand has dropp'd a dagger:
I'll catch it——Hark! a voice cries murder! ah!
My father's voice! hollow it ſounds, and calls
Me from the tomb——I'll follow it; for there
I ſhall again behold my dear Alphonſo.

SCENE IX.

GONSALEZ *alone.*

She's greatly griev'd; nor am I leſs ſurpriz'd.
Oſmyn Alphonſo! no; ſhe over-rates
My policy: I ne'er ſuſpected it:
Nor now had known it, but from her miſtake.
Her huſband too! ha! where is Garcia then?
And where the crown that ſhou'd deſcend on him,
To grace the line of my poſterity?
Hold, let me think——if I ſhou'd tell the King——
Things come to this extremity; his daughter
Wedded already——what if he ſhou'd yield?
Knowing no remedy for what is paſt;
And urg'd by nature pleading for his child,
With which he ſeems to be already ſhaken.
And tho' I know he hates beyond the grave
Anſelmo's race; yet if—that if concludes me.
To doubt, when I may be aſſur'd, is folly.
But how prevent the captive queen, who means
To ſet him free? Ay, now 'tis plain; O well
Invented tale! He was Alphonſo's friend.
This ſubtile woman will amuſe the King,
If I delay——'twill do——or better ſo.
One to my wiſh. Alonzo, thou art welcome.

SCENE X.

GONSALEZ, ALONZO.

Alon. The King expects your Lordſhip,

Gonf. 'Tis no matter.
I'm not i' the way at preſent, good Alonzo.
Alon. If't pleaſe your Lordſhip, I'll return, and ſay
I have not ſeen you.
Gon. Do, my beſt Alonzo.
Yet ſtay, I would—but go; anon will ſerve——
Yet I have that requires thy ſpeedy help.
I think thou woud'ſt not ſtop to do me ſervice.
Alon. I am your creature.
Gon. Say thou art my friend.
I've ſeen thy ſword do noble execution.
Alon. All that it can your Lordſhip ſhall command.
Gon. Thanks; and I take thee at thy word; thou'ſt ſeen
Amongſt the followers of the captive queen,
Dumb men, who make their meaning known by ſigns?
Alon. I have, my Lord.
Gon. Couldſt thou procure with ſpeed
And privacy, the wearing garb of one
Of thoſe, though purchas'd by his death, I'd give
Thee ſuch reward as ſhould exceed thy wiſh.
Alon. Conclude it done. Where ſhall I wait your Lordſhip?
Gon. At my apartment. Uſe thy utmoſt diligence;
And ſay I've not been ſeen——haſte, good Alonzo.
So, this can hardly fail. Alphonſo ſlain,
The greateſt obſtacle is then remov'd.
Almeria widow'd, yet again may wed;
And I yet fix the crown on Garcia's head.

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Room of State.

KING, PEREZ, ALONZO.

KING.

NOT to be found? In an ill hour he's abſent.
None, ſay you; what, not the fav'rite eunuch?
Nor ſhe herſelf, nor any of her mutes,
Have yet requir'd admittance?

Per. None, my Lord.

King. Is Osmyn so dispos'd as I commanded?

Per. Fast bound in double chains, and at full length
He lyes supine on earth; with as much ease
She might remove the centre of this earth,
As loose the rivets of his bonds.

King. 'Tis well.

[*A Mute appears, and seeing the King retires.*

Ha! stop, and seize that mute; Alonzo follow him.
Ent'ring he met my eyes, and started back,
Frighted, and fumbling one hand in his bosom,
As to conceal th' importance of his errand.

[Alonzo *follows him, and returns with a paper.*

Alon. O bloody proof of obstinate fidelity!

King. What dost thou mean?

Alon. Soon as I seized the man,
He snatch'd from out his bosom this——and strove
With rash and greedy haste, at once to cram
The morsel down his throat. I catch'd his arm,
And hardly wrench'd his hand to wring it from him;
Which done, he drew his poniard from his side,
And on the instant plung'd it in his breast.

King. Remove the body hence ere Zara see it.

Alon. I'll be so bold to borrow his attire;
'Twill quit me of my promise to Gonsalez.

SCENE II.

KING, PEREZ.

Per. Whate'er it is, the King's complexion turns.

King. How's this? my mortal foe beneath my roof!

[*Having read the letter.*

O give me patience, all ye powers! no, rather
Give me new rage, implacable revenge,
And trebled fury——Ha! who's there?

Per. My Lord.

King. Hence, slave! how dar'st thou 'bide, to watch and
Into how poor a thing a king descends? [pry

How like thyſelf, when paſſion treads him down!
Ha! ſtir not, on thy life: for thou wert fix'd
And planted e to ſee me gorge the bait,
And laſh againſt the hook——By Heav'n, you're all
Rank traitors; thou art with the reſt combin'd;
Thou knew'ſt that Oſmyn was Alphonſo, knew'ſt
My daughter privately with him conferr'd;
And wert the ſpy and pandar to their meeting.

Per. By all that's holy, I'm amaz'd——

King. Thou ly'ſt.
Thou art accomplice too with Zara: here
Where ſhe ſets down—"Still will I ſet thee free"—[*Reading.*
That ſomewhere is repeated—"I have power [traitor.
"O'er them that are thy guards."——Mark that, thou

Per. It was your Majeſty's command, I ſhould
Obey her order——

King, reading.]——"And ſtill will ſet
"Thee free, Alphonſo"—Hell! curs'd, curs'd Alphonſo!
Falſe and perfidious Zara! Strumpet daughter!
Away, be gone, thou feeble boy, fond love,
All nature, ſoftneſs, pity and compaſſion,
This hour I throw ye off, and entertain
Full hate within my breaſt, revenge and gall.
By Heav'n, I'll meet, and counterwork this treachery.
Hark thee, villain, traitor——anſwer me, ſlave.

Per. My ſervice has not merited theſe titles.

King. Dar'ſt thou reply? Take that——thy ſervices?
thine? [*Strikes him.*
What's thy whole life, thy ſoul, thy all, to my
One moment's eaſe? Hear my command; and look
That thou obey, or horror on thy head.
Drench me thy dagger in Alphonſo's heart:
Why doſt thou ſtart? Reſolve, or——

Per.——Sir, I will.

King. 'Tis well—that when ſhe comes to ſet him free,
His teeth may grin, and mock at her remorſe.
[Perez *going.*
——Stay thee——I've farther thought—I'll add to this,

And give her eyes yet greater disappointment:
When thou hast ended him, bring me his robe;
And let the cell where she'll expect to see him
Be darken'd, so as to amuse the sight.
I'll be conducted thither——mark me well——
There with his turbant, and his robe array'd,
And laid along as he now lyes supine,
I shall convict her to her face of falsehood.
When for Alphonso's she shall take my hand,
And breathe her sighs upon my lips for his,
Sudden I'll start, and dash her with her guilt.
But see she comes; I'll shun th' encounter; thou,
Follow me, and give heed to my direction.

SCENE III.

ZARA, SELIM.

Zara. The mute not yet return'd! ha, 'twas the King!
The King that parted hence! frowning he went;
His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
Their red and angry beams; as if his sight
Would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth,
And kindle ruin in its course. Do'st think
He saw me?

Sel. Yes: but then, as if he thought
His eyes had err'd, he hastily recall'd
Th' imperfect look, and sternly turn'd away.

Zara. Shun me when seen! I fear thou hast undone me;
Thy shallow artifice begets suspicion,
And, like a cob-web-veil, but thinly shades
The face of thy design; alone disguising
What should have ne'er been seen; imperfect mischief!
Thou, like the adder, venomous and deaf,
Hast stung the traveller; and after hear'st
Not his pursuing voice; ev'n where thou think'st
To hide, the rustling leaves and bended grass
Confess, and point the path which thou hast crept.
O fate of fools! officious in contriving;
In executing puzzled, lame and lost.

Sel. Avert it, Heav'n, that you ſhould ever ſuffer
For my defect: or that the means which I
Devis'd to ſerve ſhould ruin your deſign!
Preſcience is Heav'n's alone, not given to man.
If I have fail'd in what, as being man,
I needs muſt fail; impute not as a crime
My nature's want, but puniſh nature in me:
I plead not for a pardon, and to live,
But to be puniſh'd, and forgiv'n. Here, ſtrike;
I bare my breaſt to meet your juſt revenge.

Zara. I have not leiſure now to take ſo poor
A forfeit as thy life: ſomewhat of high
And more important fate requires my thought.
When I've concluded on myſelf, if I
Think fit, I'll leave thee my command to die.
Regard me well; and dare not to reply
To what I give in charge; for I'm reſolv'd.
Give order, that the two remaining mutes
Attend me inſtantly, with each a bowl
Of ſuch ingredients mix'd, as will with ſpeed
Benumb the living faculties, and give
Moſt eaſy and inevitable death.
Yes, Oſmyn, yes; be Oſmyn or Alphonſo,
I'll give thee freedom, if thou dar'ſt be free:
Such liberty as I embrace myſelf,
Thou ſhalt partake. Since fates no more afford,
I can but die with thee to keep my word.

SCENE IV.

SCENE *opening, ſhews the Priſon.*

GONSALEZ *alone, diſguiſed like a Mute, with a dagger.*

Gon. Nor centinel, nor guard! the doors unbarr'd!
And all as ſtill as at the noon of night!
Sure death already has been buſy here.
There lyes my way, that door too is unlock'd. [*Looks in.*
Ha! ſure he ſleeps——all's dark within, ſave what
A lamp, that feebly lifts a ſickly flame,

By fits reveals——his face seems turn'd, to favour
Th' attempt. I'll steal, and do it unperceiv'd.
What noise! Some body coming? 'St, Alonzo?
No body? Sure he'll wait without——I would
'Twere done——I'll crawl, and sting him to the heart:
Then cast my skin, and leave it there to answer it. [*Goes in.*

SCENE V.

GARCIA, ALONZO.

Gar. Where? where, Alonzo? where's my Father? where
The King! confusion! all is on the rout!
All's lost, all ruin'd by surprise and treachery.
Where, where is he? why dost thou thus mislead me?
Alon. My Lord, he enter'd but a moment since,
And cou'd not pass me unperceiv'd—What, hoa!
My Lord, my Lord, what, hoa! my Lord Gonsalez!

SCENE VI.

GARCIA, ALONZO, GONSALEZ *bloody.*

Gon. Perdition choke your clamours—whence this rudeness? Garcia!
Gar. Perdition, slavery, and death,
Are ent'ring now our doors. Where is the King?
What means this blood? and why this face of horror?
Gon. No matter——give me first to know the cause
Of these your rash and ill-tim'd exclamations.
Gar. The eastern gate is to the foe betray'd,
Who, but for heaps of slain that choke the passage,
Had enter'd long ere now, and borne down all
Before 'em, to the palace walls. Unless
The King in person animate our men,
Granada's lost: and to confirm this fear,
The traitor Perez, and the captive Moor,
Are thro' a postern fled, and join the foe.
Gon. Wou'd all were false as that; for whom you call
The Moor, is dead. That Osmyn was Alphonso;
In whose heart's blood this poniard yet is warm.

Enter that chamber, and convince your eyes,
How much report has wrong'd your faith.

[Garcia *goes in.*

Alon. My Lord, for certain truth, Perez is fled;
And has declar'd the cauſe of his revolt,
Was to revenge a blow the King had giv'n him.

Gar. returning.] Ruin and horror! O heart-wounding ſight!

Gon. What ſays my ſon? what ruin? ha, what ſorrow?

Gar. Blaſted be my eyes, and ſpeechleſs be my tongue,
Rather than or to ſee, or to relate
This deed——O dire miſtake! O fatal blow!

Gon. Alon. The King——

Gar. Dead, welt'ring, drown'd in blood.
See, ſee, attir'd like Oſmyn, where he lyes. [*They look in.*
O whence, or how, or wherefore was this done?
But what imports the manner, or the cauſe!
Nothing remains to do, or to require,
But that we all ſhould turn our ſwords againſt
Ourſelves, and expiate with our own his blood.

Gon. O wretch, O curs'd, and raſh, deluded fool!
On me, on me, turn your avenging ſword.
I, who have ſpilt my Royal Maſter's blood,
Shou'd make atonement by a death as horrid;
And fall beneath the hand of my own ſon.

Gar. Ha! what? atone this murder with a greater!
The horror of that thought has damp'd my rage.
The earth already groans to bear this deed;
Oppreſs her not, nor think to ſtain her face
With more unnatural blood. Murder my father?
Better with this to rip up my own bowels,
And bathe it to the hilt, in far leſs damnable
Self-murder.

Gon. O my ſon! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondneſs theſe ills aroſe;
For thee I've been ambitious, baſe, and bloody:
For thee I've plung'd into this ſea of ſin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,

While t'other bore the crown, (to wreath thy brow)
Whose weight has sunk me ere I reach'd the shore.

Gar. Fatal ambition! Hark! the foe is enter'd: [*Shout.*
The shrilness of that shout speaks 'em at hand.
We have no time to search into the cause
Of this surprising and most fatal error.
What's to be done? the King's death known, will strike
The few remaining soldiers with despair,
And make 'em yield to mercy of the conqueror.

Alon. My Lord, I've thought how to conceal the body;
Require me not to tell the means, 'till done,
Lest you forbid what then you may approve.
[*Goes in. Shout.*

Gon. They shout again! whate'er he means to do,
'Twere fit the soldiers were amus'd with hopes;
And in the mean time fed with expectation
To see the King in person at their head.

Gar. Were it a truth, I fear 'tis now too late;
But I'll omit no care, nor haste; and try
Or to repel their force, or bravely die.

SCENE VII.

GONSALEZ, ALONZO.

Gon. What hast thou done, Alonzo?

Alon. Such a deed
As but an hour ago I'd not have done,
Tho' for the crown of universal empire.
But what are kings reduc'd to common clay?
Or who can wound the dead? I've from the body
Sever'd the head, and in an obscure corner
Dispos'd it, muffled in the mute's attire,
Leaving to view of them who enter next,
Alone the undistinguishable trunk:
Which may be still mistaken by the guards
For Osmyn, if in seeking for the King
They chance to find it.

Gon. 'Twas an act of horror;

And of a-piece with this day's dire misdeeds.
But 'tis no time to ponder or repent.
Haste thee, Alonzo, haste thee hence with speed,
To aid my son. I'll follow with the last
Reserve to re-inforce his arms: at least,
I shall make good, and shelter his retreat.

SCENE VIII.

ZARA, *followed by* SELIM, *and two* MUTES *bearing the bowls.*

Zara. Silence and solitude are ev'ry where!
Thro' all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is seen or heard. A dreadful din was wont
To grate the sense, when enter'd here; from groans
And howls of slaves condemn'd, from clink of chains,
And crash of rusty bars and creeking hinges:
And ever and anon the sight was dash'd
With frightful faces, and the meagre looks
Of grim and ghastly executioners.
Yet more this stilness terrifies my soul,
Than did that scene of complicated horrors.
It may be, that the cause of this my errand
And purpose, being chang'd from life to death,
Has also wrought this chilling change of temper.
Or does my heart bode more? what can it more
Than death?
Let 'em set down the bowls, and warn Alphonso
That I am here——so. You return and find
[*Mutes going in.*
The king; tell him, what he requir'd I've done,
And wait his coming to approve the deed.

SCENE IX.

ZARA *and* MUTES.

Zara. What have you seen? Ha! wherefore stare you thus [*The mutes return, and are affrighted.*
With haggard eyes? why are your arms a-cross?
Your heavy and desponding heads hung down?

Why is't you more than ſpeak in theſe ſad ſigns?
Give me more ample knowledge of this mourning.
[*They go to the Scene which opening ſhe perceives the body.*
Ha! proſtrate? bloody! headleſs! O——I'm loſt.
O Oſmyn! O Alpho! Cruel fate!
Cruel, cruel, O more than killing object!
I came prepar'd to die, and ſee thee die——
Nay, came prepared myſelf to give thee death—
But cannot bear to find thee thus, my Oſmyn—
O this accurſed, baſe, this treach'rous king!

SCENE X.

ZARA, SELIM.

Sel. I've ſought in vain, for no where can the king
Be found—
Zara. Get thee to hell, and ſeek him there. [*Stabs him.*
His helliſh rage had wanted means to act,
But for thy fatal and pernicious counſel.
Sel. You thought it better then——but I'm rewarded:
The mute you ſent by ſome miſchance was ſeen,
And forc'd to yield your letter with his life:
I found the dead and bloody body ſtripp'd—
My tongue falters, and my voice fails—I ſink——
Drink not the poiſon——for Alphonſo is—— [*Dies.*
Zara. As thou art now——and I ſhall quickly be.
'Tis not that he is dead; for 'twas decreed
We both ſhould die. Nor is't that I ſurvive;
I have a certain remedy for that.
But oh, he dy'd unknowing in my heart.
He knew I lov'd, but knew not to what height:
Nor that I meant to fall before his eyes,
A martyr and a victim to my vows:
Inſenſible of this laſt proof he's gone.
Yet fate alone can rob his mortal part
Of ſenſe; his ſoul ſtill ſees, and knows each purpoſe,
And fix'd event of my perſiſting faith.

Then, wherefore do I pauſe? give me the bowl
[*A Mute kneels and gives one of the bowls.*
Hover a moment, yet, thou gentle ſpirit,
Soul of my love, and I will wait thy flight:
This to our mutual bliſs when join'd above. [*Drinks.*
O friendly draught, already in my heart!
Cold, cold! my veins are icicles and froſt.
I'll creep into his boſom, lay me there;
Cover us cloſe—or I ſhall chill his breaſt,
And fright him from my arms——See, ſee, he ſlides
Still further from me; look he hides his face,
I cannot feel it——quite beyond my reach
O now he's gone, and all is dark— [*Dies.*
[*The mutes kneel and mourn over her.*

SCENE XI.

ALMERIA, LEONORA, MUTES, *etc.*

Alm. O let me ſeek him in this horrid cell;
For in the tomb, or priſon, I alone
Muſt hope to find him.
Leon. Heav'ns! what diſmal ſcene
Of death is this? The eunuch Selim ſlain!
Alm. Shew me, for I am come in ſearch of death;
But want a guide; for tears have dim'd my ſight.
Leon. Alas, a little farther, and behold
Zara all pale and dead! two frightful men,
Who ſeem the murderers, kneel weeping by,
Feeling remorſe too late for what they've done.
But O forbear——lift up your eyes no more;
But haſte away, fly from this fatal place,
Where miſeries are multiply'd; return,
Return and look not on; for there's a dagger
Ready to ſtab the ſight, and make your eyes
Rain blood——
Alm. O I foreknow, foreſee that object.
Is it at laſt then ſo? Is he then dead?
What, dead at laſt, quite, quite, for ever dead?

There, there I see him; there he lyes, the blood
Yet bubbling from his wounds——O more than savage!
Had they or hearts, or eyes, that did this deed!
Could eyes endure to guide such cruel hands?
Are not my eyes guilty alike with theirs,
That thus can gaze, and yet not turn to stone?
——I do not weep! The springs of tears are dry'd;
And on a sudden I am calm, as if
All things were well: and yet my husband's murder'd!
Yes, yes, I know to mourn! I'll sluce this heart,
The source of woe, and let the torrent loose.
——Those men have left to weep! they look on me!
I hope they murder all on whom they look.
Behold me well; your bloody hands have err'd,
And wrongfully have slain those innocents:
I am the sacrifice design'd to bleed;
And come prepar'd to yield my throat———they shake
Their heads, in sign of grief and innocence!
[*They point at the bowl on the ground.*
And point! what mean they? Ha! a cup. O well
I understand what medicine has been here.
O noble thirst! yet greedy to drink all———
——Oh for another draught of death—What mean they?
[*They point at the other cup.*
Ha! point again? 'tis there, and full, I hope.
Thanks to the liberal hand that fill'd thee thus;
I'll drink my glad acknowledgement——
Leon. O hold
For mercy's sake; upon my knee I beg——
Alm. With thee the kneeling world should beg in vain.
Seest thou not there? behold who prostrate lyes,
And pleads against thee? who shall then prevail?
Yet I will take a cold and parting leave,
From his pale lips; I'll kiss him, ere I drink,
Lest the rank juice shou'd blister on my mouth,
And stain the colour of my last adieu.

Horror! a headleſs trunk! nor lips nor face,
[*Coming nearer the body, ſtarts and lets fall the cup.*
But ſpouting veins, and mangled fleſh! O, oh!

SCENE, *The Laſt.*

ALMERIA, LEONORA, ALPHONSO, HELI, PEREZ, *with* GARCIA *priſoner, guards and attendants.*

Alph. Away, ſtand off, where is ſhe? let me fly,
Save her from death, and ſnatch her to my heart.

Alm. Oh!

Alph. Forbear; my arms alone ſhall hold her up,
Warm her to life, and wake her into gladneſs.
O let me talk to thy reviving ſenſe,
The words of joy and peace; warm thy cold beauties,
With the new-fluſhing ardour of my cheek;
Into thy lips pour the ſoft trickling balm
Of cordial ſighs; and re-inſpire thy boſom
With the breath of love. Shine, awake, Almeria,
Give a new birth to thy long-ſhaded eyes,
Then double on the day reflected light.

Alm. Where am I? Heav'n! what does this dream intend?

Alph. O may'ſt thou never dream of leſs delight,
Nor ever wake to leſs ſubſtantial joys.

Alm. Giv'n me again from death! O all ye pow'rs
Confirm this miracle! Can I believe
My ſight, againſt my ſight? and ſhall I truſt
That ſenſe, which in one inſtant ſhews him dead
And living? Yes I will; I've been abus'd
With apparitions and affrighting fantoms:
This is my Lord, my life, my only huſband:
I have him now, and we no more will part.
My father too ſhall have compaſſion——

Alph. O my heart's comfort; 'tis not giv'n to this
Frail life, to be entirely bleſs'd. Even now,
In this extremeſt joy my ſoul can taſte,
Yet am I daſh'd to think that thou muſt weep;
Thy father fell, where he deſign'd my death.

Gonſalez and Alonzo, both of wounds
Expiring, have with their laſt breath confeſs'd
The juſt decrees of Heav'n, which on themſelves
Has turn'd their own moſt bloody purpoſes.
Nay, I muſt grant, 'tis fit you ſhou'd be thus——
[*She weeps.*
Let 'em remove the body from her ſight.
Ill-fated Zara! Ha! a cup? Alas!
Thy error then is plain; but I were flint
Not to o'erflow in tribute to thy memory.
O Garcia!——
Whoſe virtue has renounc'd thy father's crimes;
Seeſt thou, how juſt the hand of Heav'n has been?
Let us, who thro' our innocence ſurvive,
Still in the paths of honour, perſevere,
And not from paſt or preſent ills deſpair:
For bleſſings ever wait on virtuous deeds;
And tho' a late, a ſure reward ſucceeds.
[*Exeunt Omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs BRACEGIRDLE.

THE tragedy thus done, I am, you know,
No more a princeſs, but in *ſtatu quo:*
And now as unconcern'd this mourning wear,
As if indeed a widow or an heir.
I've leiſure now to mark your ſev'ral faces,
And know each critic by his ſour grimaces.
To poiſon plays, I ſee ſome where they ſit;
Scatter'd, like rats-bane, up and down the pit;
While others watch, like pariſh-ſearchers hir'd
To tell of what diſeaſe the play expir'd.
O with what joy they run to ſpread the news
Of a damn'd poet, and departed muſe!
But if he 'ſcape, with what regret they're ſeiz'd!
And how they're diſappointed when they're pleas'd!
Critics to plays for the ſame end reſort,
That ſurgeons wait on trials in a court;
For innocence condemn'd they've no reſpect,
Provided they've a body to diſſect.
As Suſſex men, that dwell upon the ſhore,
Look out when ſtorms ariſe, and billows roar,
Devoutly praying, with uplifted hands,
That ſome well-laden ſhip may ſtrike the ſands;
To whoſe rich cargo they may make pretence,
And fatten on the ſpoils of providence:
So critics throng to ſee a new play ſplit,
And thrive and proſper on the wrecks of wit.
Small hope our poet from theſe proſpects draws;
And therefore to the fair commends his cauſe.
Your tender hearts to mercy are inclin'd,
With whom, he hopes, this play will favour find,
Which was an off'ring to the ſex deſign'd.

THE

WAY OF THE WORLD.

A

COMEDY.

" Audire eſt operæ pretium, procedere recte
" Qui mœchos non vultis"——— Hor. Sat. 2. Lib. 2.
" Metuat, doti deprenſa."—— Ibid.

To the Right Honourable

R A L P H,

Earl of MONTAGUE, &c.

My LORD,

WHETHER the world will arraign me of vanity or not, that I have presumed to dedicate this comedy to your Lordship, I am yet in doubt; though, it may be, it is some degree of vanity even to doubt of it. One who has at any time had the honour of your Lordship's conversation, cannot be supposed to think very meanly of that which he would prefer to your perusal; yet it were to incur the imputation of too much sufficiency, to pretend to such a merit as might abide the test of your Lordship's censure.

Whatever value may be wanting to this play while yet it is mine, will be sufficiently made up to it, when it is once become your Lordship's; and it is my security, that I cannot have over-rated it more by my dedication, than your Lordship will dignify it by your patronage.

That it succeeded on the stage, was almost beyond my expectation; for but little of it was prepared for the general taste which seems now to be predominant in the palates of our audience.

Thoſe characters which are meant to be ridiculed in moſt of our comedies, are of fools ſo groſs, that, in my humble opinion, they ſhould rather diſturb than divert the well-natured and reflecting part of an audience; they are rather objects of charity than contempt; and inſtead of moving our mirth, they ought very often to excite our compaſſion.

This reflection moved me to deſign ſome characters, which ſhould appear ridiculous, not ſo much through a natural folly (which is incorrigible, and therefore not proper for the ſtage) as through an affected wit; a wit, which at the ſame time that it is affected, is alſo falſe. As there is ſome difficulty in the formation of a character of this nature, ſo there is ſome hazard which attends the progreſs of its ſucceſs upon the ſtage; for many come to a play, ſo over-charged with criticiſm, that they very often let fly their cenſure, when through their raſhneſs they have miſtaken their aim. This I had occaſion lately to obſerve; for this play had been acted two or three days, before ſome of theſe haſty judges could find the leiſure to diſtinguiſh betwixt the character of a Witwoud and a Truewit.

I muſt beg your Lordſhip's pardon for this digreſſion from the true courſe of this epiſtle; but that it may not ſeem altogether impertinent, I beg that I may plead the occaſion of it, in part of that excuſe of which I ſtand in need, for recommending this comedy to your protection. It is only by the countenance of your Lordſhip, and the *few* ſo qua-

lified, that such who write with care and pains can hope to be distinguished; for the prostituted name of *poet* promiscuously levels all that bear it.

Terence, the most correct writer in the world, had a Scipio and a Lælius, if not to assist him, at least to support him in his reputation; and notwithstanding his extraordinary merit, it may be their countenance was not more than necessary.

The purity of his style, the delicacy of his turns, and the justness of his characters, were all of them beauties, which the greater part of his audience were incapable of tasting; some of the coarsest strokes of Plautus, so severely censured by Horace, were more likely to affect the multitude; such, who come with expectation to laugh at the last act of a play, and are better entertained with two or three unseasonable jests, than with the artful solution of the *fable*.

As Terence excelled in his performances, so had he great advantages to encourage his undertakings; for he built most on the foundations of Menander; his plots were generally modelled, and his characters ready drawn to his hand. He copied Menander, and Menander had not less light in the information of his characters, from the observations of Theophrastus, of whom he was a disciple; and Theophrastus, it is known, was not only the disciple, but the immediate successor of Aristotle, the first and greatest judge of poetry. These were great models to design by; and the further advantage which Terence possessed, towards giving his play the due

ornaments of purity of ſtyle, and juſtneſs of manners, was not leſs conſiderable, from the freedom of converſation, which was permitted him with Lælius and Scipio, two of the greateſt and moſt polite men of his age. And indeed the privilege of ſuch a converſation is the only certain means of attaining to the perfection of dialogue.

If it has happened in any part of this comedy, that I have gained a turn of ſtyle, or expreſſion more correct, or at leaſt more corrigible than thoſe which I have formerly written, I muſt, with equal pride and gratitude, aſcribe it to the honour of your Lordſhip's admitting me into your converſation, and that of a ſociety where every body elſe was ſo well worthy of you, in your retirement laſt ſummer from the town; for it was immediately after, that this comedy was written. If I have failed in my performance, it is only to be regretted, where there were ſo many, not inferior either to a Scipio or a Lælius, that there ſhould be one wanting, equal in capacity to a Terence.

If I am not miſtaken, poetry is almoſt the only art which has not yet laid claim to your Lordſhip's patronage. Architecture and painting, to the great honour of our country, have flouriſhed under your influence and protection. In the mean time, poetry, the eldeſt ſiſter of all arts, and parent of moſt, ſeems to have reſigned her birth-right, by having neglected to pay her duty to your Lordſhip, and by permitting others of a later extraction, to prepoſſeſs that place in your eſteem, to which none

can pretend a better title. Poetry, in its nature, is sacred to the good and great; the relation between them is reciprocal, and they are ever propitious to it. It is the privilege of poetry to address them, and it is their prerogative alone to give it protection.

This received maxim is a general apology for all writers who consecrate their labours to great men; but I could wish at this time, that this address was exempted from the common pretence of all dedications; and that as I can distinguish your Lordship even among the most deserving, so this offering might become remarkable by some particular instance of respect, which should assure your Lordship, that I am with all due sense of your extreme worthiness and humanity,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

and most obliged humble servant,

WILLIAM CONGREVE.

TO

Mr CONGREVE.

Occaſioned by his COMEDY

CALLED

The WAY of the WORLD.

WHEN pleaſure's falling to the low delight,
In the vain joys of the uncertain ſight;
No ſenſe of wit when rude ſpectators know,
But in diſtorted geſture, farce and ſhow;
How could, great author, your aſpiring mind
Dare to write only to the few refin'd!
Yet tho' that nice ambition you purſue,
'Tis not in Congreve's power to pleaſe but few.
Implicitly devoted to his fame,
Well-dreſs'd Barbarians know his awful name.
Though ſenſeleſs they're of mirth, but when they laugh,
As they feel wine, but when, 'till drunk, they quaff.

On you, from fate a laviſh portion fell
In ev'ry way of writing to excell.
Your muſe applauſe to Arabella brings,
In notes as ſweet as Arabella ſings.
Whene'er you draw an undiſſembled woe,
With ſweet diſtreſs your rural numbers flow.
Paſtora's the complaint of ev'ry ſwain,
Paſtora ſtill the echo of the plain!
Or if your muſe deſcribe, with warming force,
The wounded Frenchman falling from his horſe;
And her own William glorious in the ſtriſe,
Beſtowing on the proſtrate foe his life:
You the great act as generouſly rehearſe,
And all the Engliſh fury's in your verſe.

By your selected scenes, and handsome choice,
Ennobled comedy exalts her voice;
You check unjust esteem and fond desire,
And teach to scorn, what else we should admire;
The just impression taught by you we bear,
The player acts the world, the world the player;
Whom still that world unjustly disesteems,
Though he, alone, professes what he seems:
But when your muse assumes her tragic part,
She conquers and she reigns in ev'ry heart.
To mourn with her men cheat their private woe,
And gen'rous pity's all the grief they know:
The widow, who, impatient of delay,
From the town joys must mask it to the play,
Joins with your Mourning Bride's resistless moan,
And weeps a loss she slighted, when her own;
You give us torment, and you give us ease,
And vary our afflictions as you please.
Is not a heart so kind as yours in pain,
To load your friends with cares you only feign;
Your friends in grief, compos'd yourself, to leave?
But 'tis the only way you'll e'er deceive.
Then still, great Sir, your moving pow'r employ,
To lull our sorrow, and correct our joy.

RICHARD STEELE.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr BETTERTON.

OF thoſe few fools who with ill ſtars are curſt,
Sure ſcribbling fools, call'd poets, fare the worſt:
For they're a ſort of fools which Fortune makes,
And after ſhe has made 'em fools, forſakes.
With Nature's oafs 'tis quite a diff'rent caſe,
For Fortune favours all her ideot-race.
In her own neſt the cuckow-eggs we find,
O'er which ſhe broods to hatch the changling-kind.
No portion for her own ſhe has to ſpare,
So much ſhe doats on her adopted care.

Poets are bubbles, by the town drawn in,
Suffer'd at firſt ſome trifling ſtakes to win:
But what unequal hazards do they run!
Each time they write they venture all they've won:
The ſquire that's butter'd ſtill, is ſure to be undone.
This author, heretofore, has found your favour;
But pleads no merit from his paſt behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain preſumption,
Shou'd grants, to poets made, admit reſumption:
And in Parnaſſus he might loſe his ſeat,
If that be found a forfeited eſtate.

He owns with toil he wrought the following ſcenes;
But, if they're naught, ne'er ſpare him for his pains:
Damn him the more; have no commiſeration
For dulneſs on mature deliberation.
He ſwears he'll not reſent one hiſs'd-off ſcene,
Nor, like thoſe peeviſh wits, his play maintain,
Who, to aſſert their ſenſe, your taſte arraign.

Some plot we think he has, and some new thought;
Some humour too, no farce; but that's a fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect;
For so reform'd a town, who dares correct?
To please, this time, has been his sole pretence,
He'll not instruct, lest it should give offence.
Shou'd he by chance a knave or fool expose,
That hurts none here, sure here are none of those:
In short, our play shall (with your leave to shew it)
Give you one instance of a passive poet,
Who to your judgments yields all resignation;
So save or damn, after your own discretion.

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

FAINALL, in love with Mrs Marwood,	Mr BETTERTON.
MIRABELL, in love with Mrs Millamant,	Mr VERBRUGGEN.
WITWOUD, followers of Mrs PETULANT, Millamant,	Mr BOWEN. Mr BOWMAN.
Sir WILFUL WITWOUD, half brother to Witwoud, and nephew to Lady Wishfort,	Mr UNDERHILL.
WAITWELL, servant to Mirabell,	Mr BRIGHT.

WOMEN.

Lady WISHFORT, enemy to Mirabell, for having falsly pretended love to her,	Mrs LEIGH.
Mrs MILLAMANT, a fine lady, niece to Lady Wishfort, and loves Mirabell,	Mrs BRACEGIRDLE.
Mrs MARWOOD, friend to Mr Fainall, and likes Mirabell,	Mrs BARRY.
Mrs FAINALL, daughter to lady Wishfort, and wife to Fainall, formerly friend to Mirabell,	Mrs BOWMAN.
FOIBLE, woman to Lady Wishfort,	Mrs WILLIS.
MINCING, woman to Mrs Millamant,	Mrs PRINCE.

Dancers, Footmen and Attendants.

SCENE, LONDON.

The time equal to that of the representation.

THE

WAY OF THE WORLD.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Chocolate-house.

MIRABELL *and* FAINALL *[rising from cards]* BETTY *waiting.*

MIRABELL.

YOU are a fortunate man, Mr Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No, I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently; the coldness of a losing gamster lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

Mira. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why so reserv'd? Something has put you out of humour.

Mira. Not at all: I happen to be grave to-day, and you are gay; that's all.

Fain. Confess, Millamant and you quarrell'd last night after I left you; my fair cousin has some humours that would tempt the patience of a Stoic. What, some cox-

comb came in, and was well receiv'd by her, while you were by!

Mir. Witwoud and Petulant; and what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in—

Fain. O there it is then——she has a lasting passion for you, and with reason.——What, then my wife was there?

Mir. Yes, and Mrs Marwood, and three or four more, whom I never saw before; seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whisper'd one another; then complained aloud of the vapours, and after fell into a profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mir. For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke thro' her painful taciturnity, with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her, but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose, and with a constrain'd smile, told her, I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome; she redden'd, and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mir. She is more mistress of herself, than to be under the necessity of such a resignation.

Fain. What? tho' half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my Lady's approbation?

Mir. I was then in such a humour, that I should have been better pleas'd if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now, I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal nights; they have 'em three times a-week, and meet by turns, at one another's apartments, where they come together like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murder'd reputations of the week. You and I are excluded; and it was once propos'd, that all the male sex should be excepted; but somebody mov'd that, to avoid scandal, there might be one

man of the community; upon which motion Witwoud and Petulant were inroll'd members.

Mir. And who may have been the foundress of this sect? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and full of the vigour of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratifia; and let posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

Mir. The discovery of your sham addresses to her to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation; had you dissembled better, things might have continu'd in the state of nature.

Mir. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and compliment her with the imputation of an affair with a young fellow, which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a dropsy, persuaded her she was reported to be in labour. The devil's in't, if an old woman is to be flatter'd further, unless a man shou'd endeavour downright personally to debauch her; and that my virtue forbad me. But for the discovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend Mrs Marwood.

Fain. What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mir. She was always civil to me 'till of late; I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice, and think that she who does not refuse 'em ev'ry thing, can refuse 'em nothing

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and though you may have cruelty enough not to satisfy a lady's longing, you have too much generosity not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected, and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mir. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the Lady is more indebted to you than is your wife.

Fain. Fy, fy, friend, if you grow censorious I must leave you;———I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

Mir. Who are they?

Fain. Petulant and Witwoud——Bring me some chocolate.

Mir. Betty, what says your clock?

Bet. Turn'd of the last canonical hour, Sir.

Mir. How pertinently the jade answers me! há! almost one o' clock! [*Looking on his watch.*] O, y'are come——

SCENE II.

MIRABEL *and* FOOTMAN.

Mir. Well, is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

Serv. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras, that they stand behind one another, as 'twere a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up; and no hopes appearing of dispatch; besides, the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have fail'd before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's-place; and there we were rivetted in a trice.

Mir. So, so, you are sure they are married.

Serv. Married and bedded, Sir: I am a witness.

Mir. Have you the certificate?

Serv. Here it is, Sir.

Mir. Has the tailor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Mir. That's well. Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the consummation 'till farther orders;

bid Waitwell ſhake his ears, and Dame Partlet ruſtle up her feathers, and meet me at one o' clock by Roſamond's pond; that I may ſee her before ſhe returns to her lady: and as you tender your ears be ſecret.

SCENE III.

MIRABELL, FAINALL, BETTY.

Fain. Joy of your ſucceſs, Mirabell; you look pleas'd.

Mir. Ay; I have been engag'd in a matter of ſome ſort of mirth, which is not ripe for diſcovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married, and of conſequence ſhould be diſcreet, will ſuffer your wife to be of ſuch a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Beſides, moſt who are engag'd are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give ſcandal.

Mir. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the ſcandal: for a woman, who is not a fool, can have but one reaſon for aſſociating with a man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you ſee Witwoud entertain'd by Millamant?

Mir. Of her underſtanding I am, if not of her perſon.

Fain. You do her wrong; for, to give her her due, ſhe has wit.

Mir. She has beauty enough to make any man think ſo; and complaiſance enough not to contradict him who ſhall tell her ſo.

Fain. For a paſſionate lover, methinks you are a man ſomewhat too diſcerning in the failings of your miſtreſs.

Mir. And for a diſcerning man, ſomewhat too paſſionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are ſo natural, or ſo artful, that they become her; and thoſe affections which in another woman would be odious, ſerve but to

make her more agreeable. I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once us'd me with that insolence, that in revenge I took her to pieces; sifted her, and separated her failings; I studied 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes one day or other to hate her heartily: to which end I so us'd myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less and less disturbance; 'till in a few days it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeas'd. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and in all probability in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her charms, as you are with her defects, and my life on't, you are your own man again.

Mir. Say you so?

Fain. Ay, ay, I have experience: I have a wife, and so forth.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] MESSENGER.

Mess. Is one Squire Witwoud here?

Bet. Yes, what's your business?

Mess. I have a letter for him, from his brother Sir Wilful, which I am charg'd to deliver into his own hands.

Bet. He's in the next room, friend——that way.

SCENE V.

MIRABELL, FAINALL, BETTY.

Mir. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilful Witwoud?

Fain. He is expected to-day. Do you know him?

Mir. I have seen him, he promises to be an extraor-

dinary perſon; I think you have the honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half brother to this Witwoud by a former wife, who was ſiſter to my Lady Wiſhfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you muſt call couſins too.

Mir. I had rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himſelf for travel.

Mir. For travel! why, the man that I mean is above forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe ſhould know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mir. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to ſave the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fain. By no means; 'tis better as 'tis; 'tis better to trade with a little loſs, than to be quite eaten up with being overſtocked.

Mir. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant, and thoſe of the Squire his brother, any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwoud grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab. One will melt in your mouth, and t'other ſet your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mir. So one will be rotten before he be ripe, and the other will be rotten without being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilfull is an odd mixture of baſhfulneſs and obſtinacy——But when he's drunk he's as loving as the monſter in the Tempeſt, and much after the ſame manner. To give t'other his due, he has ſomething of good nature, and does not always want wit.

Mir. Not always; but as often as his memory fails him, and his common-place of compariſons. He is a fool with a good memory, and ſome ſcraps of other folks wit. He is one whoſe converſation can never be approv'd, yet it is now and then to be endur'd. He has indeed one

good quality, he is not exceptious; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest; and call downright rudeness and ill language, satire and fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish this picture, you have an opportunity to do it at full length. Behold the original.

SCENE VI.

[To them] WITWOUD.

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears; pity me, Fainall; Mirabell, pity me.

Mir. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty?

Bet. Did not a messenger bring you one but now, Sir?

Wit. Ay, but no other?

Bet. No, Sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard;——A messenger, a mule, a beast of burden! he has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another: and what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory.

Mir. A fool, and your brother, Witwoud!

Wit. Ay, ay, my half brother. My half brother he is, no nearer upon honour.

Mir. Then 'tis possible he may be half a fool.

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell, le Drole! good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him:——Fainall, how does your Lady? Gad, I say any thing in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I shou'd ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say: but she's the best woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you ſay, or elſe your commendation wou'd go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgment, Mirabell.

Mir. You had better ſtep and aſk his wife, if you wou'd be credibly inform'd.

Wit. Mirabell?

Mir. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I aſk ten thouſand pardons;——gad I have forgot what I was going to ſay to you.

Mir. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but pr'ythee excuſe me,——my memory is ſuch a memory.

Mir. Have a care of ſuch apologies, Witwoud;——for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain, either of the ſpleen or his memory.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his money——my money it was——I have no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play;——for you are ſure to be too hard for him at repartee; ſince you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune muſt be his of courſe.

Mira. I don't find that Petulant confeſſes the ſuperiority of wit to be your talent, Witwoud.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and wou'd breed debates——Petulant's my friend, and a very honeſt fellow, and a very pretty fellow, and has a ſmattering——faith and troth a pretty deal of an odd ſort of a ſmall wit: nay, I'll do him juſtice. I'm his friend, I won't wrong him.——And if he had any judgment in the world,——he wou'd not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merit of my friend.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over-nicely bred?

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I muſt own——no more breeding than a bum

baily, that I can grant you—'tis pity; the fellow has fire and life.

Mir. What courage?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that, I can't say as to that.———Yes, faith, in a controverſy, he'll contradict any body.

Mir. Tho' 'twere a man whom he fear'd, or a woman whom he lov'd.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he ſpeaks;—we have all our failings: you are too hard upon him, you are, faith. Let me excuſe him——I can defend moſt of his faults, except one or two: one he has, that's the truth on't; if he were my brother. I cou'd not acquit him—that indeed I cou'd wiſh were otherwiſe.

Mir. Ay marry, what's that, Witwoud?

Wit. O pardon me———expoſe the infirmities of my friend?———No, my dear, excuſe me there.

Fain. What, I warrant he's unſincere, or 'tis ſome ſuch trifle.

Wit. No, no, what if he be? 'tis no matter for that, his wit will excuſe that: a wit ſhou'd no more be ſincere, than a woman conſtant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mir. May be you think him too poſitive?

Wit. No, no, his being poſitive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up converſation.

Fain. Too illiterate?

Wit. That! that's his happineſs——his want of learning gives him the more opportunities to ſhew his natural parts.

Mir. He wants words?

Wit. Ay: but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleaſure very often to explain his meaning.

Fain. He's impudent?

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mir. Vain?

Wit. No.

Mir. What! he ſpeaks unſeaſonable truths ſometimes, becauſe he has not wit enough to invent an evaſion?

Wit. Truths! ha, ha, ha! no, no; ſince you will have it,———I mean, he never ſpeaks truth at all,——that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

SCENE VII.

[*To them*] COACHMAN.

Coach. Is Maſter Petulant here, Miſtreſs?

Bet. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a coach wou'd ſpeak with him.

Fain. O brave Petulant! three!

Bet. I'll tell him.

Coach. You muſt bring two diſhes of chocolate and a glaſs of cinnamon-water.

SCENE VIII.

MIRABELL, FAINALL, WITWOUD.

Wit. That ſhou'd be for two faſting ſtrumpets, and a bawd troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mira. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, friendſhip without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toaſting; but to tell you a ſecret, theſe are trulls whom he allows coach hire, and ſomething more, by the week, to call on him once a-day at public places.

Mir. How!

Wit. You ſhall ſee he won't go to 'em, becauſe there's no more company here to take notice of him———why

this is nothing to what he us'd to do:—before he found out this way, I have known him call for himself——

Fain. Call for himself! what doſt thou mean?

Wit. Mean, why he wou'd ſlip you out of this chocolate-houſe, juſt when you had been talking to him————as ſoon as your back was turn'd——whip he was gone;——then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and ſcarf, and a maſk, flap into a hackney-coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice; where he wou'd ſend in for himſelf, that is I mean, call for himſelf, wait for himſelf, nay, and what's more, not finding himſelf, ſometimes leave a letter for himſelf.

Mir. I confeſs this is ſomething extraordinary——— I believe he waits for himſelf now, he is ſo long a coming: O I aſk his pardon.

SCENE IX.

PETULANT, MIRABELL, FAINALL, WITWOUD, BETTY.

Bet. Sir, the coach ſtays.

Pet. Well, well; I come;——'Sbud, a man had as good be a profeſs'd midwife, as a profeſs'd whoremaſter, at this rate; to be knock'd up and rais'd at all hours, and in all places. Pox on 'em, I won't come————d'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come———let 'em ſhivel and cry their hearts out.

Fain. You were very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it paſs———I have a humour to be cruel.

Mir. I hope they are not perſons of condition that you uſe at this rate.

Pet. Condition, condition's a dry'd fig, if I am not in humour——by this hand, if they were your——a——a——your what d'ye-call-'ems themſelves, they muſt wait or rub off, if I want appetite.

Mir. What d'ye-call-'ems! what are they, Witwoud?

Wit. Empreſſes, my dear—by your what-d'ye-call-'ems he means Sultana Queens.

Pet. Ay, Roxolana's.

Mir. Cry you mercy.

Fain. Witwoud ſays they are——

Pet. What does he ſay th'are?

Wit. I? fine ladies, I ſay.

Pet. Paſs on, Witwoud—hark'ee, by this light his relations—two co-heireſſes his couſins, and an old aunt, who loves caterwauling better than a conventicle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha, I had a mind to ſee how the rogue wou'd come off—ha, ha, ha, gad I can't be angry with him, if he had ſaid they were my mother and my ſiſters!

Mir. No?

Wit. No; the rogue's wit and readineſs of invention charm me, dear Petulant.

Bet. They are gone, Sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complection, ſaves paint.

Fain. This continence is all diſſembled; this is in order to have ſomething to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and ſwear he has abandoned the whole ſex for her ſake.

Mir. Have you not left off your impudent pretenſion there yet? I ſhall cut your throat ſome time or other, Petulant, about that buſineſs.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that paſs—there are other throats to be cut——

Mir. Meaning mine, Sir?

Pet. Not I—I mean no body—I know nothing—but there are uncles and nephews in the world—and they may be rivals—what then! All's one for that———

Mir. How! hark'ee, Petulant, come hither——explain, or I ſhall call your interpreter.

Pet. Explain! I know nothing—why, you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wiſhfort's?

Mir. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough—you and he are not friends; and if he ſhou'd marry and have a child, you may be diſinherited, ha?

Mir. Where haſt thou ſtumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why then ſay I know ſomething.

Mir. Come, thou art an honeſt fellow, Petulant, and ſhalt make love to my miſtreſs, thou ſha't faith. What haſt thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I? nothing, I. If throats are to be cut, let ſwords claſh; ſnug's the word, I ſhrug and am ſilent.

Mir. O raillery, raillery. Come, I know thou art in the womens ſecrets——what, you're a cabaliſt; I know you ſtaid at Millamant's laſt night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me? tell me. If thou hadſt but good nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwoud, who is now thy competitor in fame, wou'd ſhew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he wou'd no more be ſeen by thee, than Mercury is by the ſun. Come, I'm ſure thou wo't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common ſenſe then, for the future?

Mir. Faith, I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that Heav'n may grant it thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, hark'ee.

Fain. Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as a lover.

Wit. Pſhaw, pſhaw, that ſhe laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part——but that it is almoſt a faſhion to admire her, I ſhou'd—hark'ee—to tell you a ſecret, but let it go no further——between friends, I ſhall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handſome; but ſhe's a ſort of an uncertain woman.

Fain. I thought you had died for her.

Wit. Umh—no—

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what ſhe will hardly allow any body elſe——now, demme, I ſhou'd hate that, if ſhe were as handſome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not ſo ſure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think ſo?

Wit. We ſtaid pretty late there laſt night: and heard ſomething of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town—and is between him and the beſt part of his eſtate; Mirabell and he are at ſome diſtance, as my Lady Wiſhfort has been told; and you know ſhe hates Mirabell worſe than a quaker hates a parrot, or than a fiſhmonger hates a hard froſt. Whether this uncle has ſeen Mrs Millamant or not I cannot ſay, but there were items of ſuch a treaty being in embryo; and if it ſhou'd come to life, poor Mirabell wou'd be in ſome ſort unfortunately ſobb'd, i'faith.

Fain. 'Tis impoſſible Millamant ſhou'd hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my dear, I can't tell; ſhe's a woman, and a kind of humouriſt.

Mir. And this is the ſum of what you could collect laſt night?

Pet. The quinteſſence. May be Witwoud knows more, he ſtaid longer——beſides, they never mind him; they ſay any thing before him.

Mir. I thought you had been the greateſt favourite.

Pet. Ay, *tete a tete*, but not in public, becauſe I make remarks.

Mir. You do?

Pet. Ay, ay; pox, I'm malicious, man. Now he's ſoft you know; they are not in awe of him—the fellow's well-bred; he's what you call a——what-d'ye-call-ems, a fine gentleman; but he's ſilly withal.

Mir. I thank you, I know as much as my curioſity requires. Fainall, are you for the Mall?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the ladies talk'd of being there.

Mir. I thought you were oblig'd to watch for your brother Sir Wilfull's arrival.

Wit. No, no; he comes to my aunt's, my Lady Wishfort; pox on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what shall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards: and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O rare Petulant; thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning; thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough, I'm in a humour to be severe.

Mir. Are you? pray then walk by yourselves—let not us be accessary to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what? then let 'em either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they wou'd not be thought to understand.

Mir. But hast not thou then sense enough to know that thou ought'st to be most ashamed thyself, when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand—I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt, or ill-breeding.

Mir. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill-manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

St James's Park.

Mrs FAINALL, *and* Mrs MARWOOD.

Mrs FAINALL.

AY, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we muſt find the means in ourſelves, and among ourſelves. Men are ever in extremes; either doating or averſe. While they are lovers, if they have fire and ſenſe, their jealouſies are unſupportable; and when they ceaſe to love, (we ought to think at leaſt) they lothe; they look upon us with horror and diſtaſte; they meet us like the ghoſts of what we were, and as from ſuch, fly from us.

Mrs *Mar.* True, 'tis an unhappy circumſtance of life, that love ſhou'd ever die before us; and that the man ſo often ſhou'd out-live the lover. But ſay what you will, 'tis better to be left, than never to have been lov'd. To paſs our youth in dull indifference, to refuſe the ſweets of life becauſe they once muſt leave us, is as prepoſterous as to wiſh to have been born old, becauſe we one day muſt be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waſte, but it ſhall never ruſt in my poſſeſſion.

Mrs *Fain.* Then it ſeems you diſſemble an averſion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's humour.

Mrs *Mar.* Certainly. To be free; I have no taſte of thoſe inſipid dry diſcourſes, with which our ſex of force muſt entertain themſelves, apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profeſs eternal friendſhips, and ſeem to doat like lovers; but 'tis not in our natures long to perſevere. Love will reſume his empire in our

breasts, and every heart, soon or late, receive and re-admit him as its lawful tyrant.

Mrs *Fain.* Bless me, how have I been deceiv'd! why you profess a libertine.

Mrs *Mar.* You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs *Fain.* Never.

Mrs *Mar.* You hate mankind?

Mrs *Fain.* Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs *Mar.* Your husband?

Mrs *Fain.* Most transcendently; ay, tho' I say it, meritoriously.

Mrs *Mar.* Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs *Fain.* There.

Mrs *Mar.* I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs *Fain.* Is it possible? dost thou hate those vipers men?

Mrs *Mar.* I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em; the next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget 'em.

Mrs *Fain.* There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea.

Mrs *Mar.* And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion further.

Mrs *Fain.* How?

Mrs *Mar.* Faith by marrying; if I cou'd but find one that lov'd me very well, and would be throughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

Mrs *Fain.* You would not make him a cuckold?

Mrs *Mar.* No; but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs *Fain.* Why, had not you as good do it?

Mrs *Mar.* O if he shou'd ever discover it, he wou'd then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I wou'd

have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

Mrs *Fain.* Ingenious mischief! wou'd thou wert married to Mirabell.

Mrs *Mar.* Wou'd I were.

Mrs *Fain.* You change colour.

Mrs *Mar.* Because I hate him.

Mrs *Fain.* So do I; but I can hear him nam'd. But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs *Mar.* I never lov'd him; he is, and always was insufferable proud.

Mrs *Fain.* By the reason you give for your aversion, one wou'd think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies must acquit him.

Mrs *Mar.* O then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs *Fain.* Do I? I think I am a little sick o'the sudden.

Mrs *Mar.* What ails you?

Mrs *Fain.* My husband. Don't you see him? He turn'd short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

SCENE II.

[*To them*] FAINALL *and* MIRABELL.

Mrs *Mar.* Ha, ha, ha! he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs *Fain.* For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Fain. My dear.

Mrs *Fain.* My soul.

Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs *Fain.* D'ye think so?

Mira. He is the only man that does, Madam.

Mrs *Fain.* The only man that wou'd tell me so at

leaſt; and the only man from whom I cou'd hear it without mortification.

Fain. O my dear, I am ſatisfy'd of your tenderneſs; I know you cannot reſent any thing from me; eſpecially what is an effect of concern.

Mrs *Fain.* Mr Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleaſant relation laſt night, I wou'd fain hear it out.

Mir. The perſons concern'd in that affair, have yet a tolerable reputation.———I am afraid Mr Fainall will be cenſorious.

Mrs *Fain.* He has a humour more prevailing than his curioſity, and will willingly diſpenſe with the hearing of one ſcandalous ſtory, to avoid giving an occaſion to make another by being ſeen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr Mirabell, and I dare promiſe you will oblige us both.

SCENE III.

FAINALL, Mrs MARWOOD.

Fain. Excellent creature! well, ſure if I ſhou'd live to be rid of my wife, I ſhou'd be a miſerable man.

Mrs *Mar.* Ay!

Fain. For having only that one hope, the accompliſhment of it, of conſequence, muſt put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who muſt ſurvive his hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes, but to ſit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mrs *Mar.* Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. Faith, I think not.

Mrs *Mar.* Pray let us; I have a reaſon.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs *Mar.* Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs *Mar.* If I am, is it inconſiſtent with my love to you that I am tender of your honour?

Fain. You wou'd intimate then, as if there were a fellow-feeling between my wife and him.

Mrs *Mar.* I think she does not hate him to that degree she wou'd be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs *Mar.* It may be you are deceiv'd.

Fain. It may be so. I do now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs *Mar.* What?

Fain. That I have been deceiv'd, Madam, and you are false.

Mrs *Mar.* That I am false! what mean you?

Fain. To let you know I see through all your little arts ——come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another, have made you clash 'till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession redning on your cheeks, and sparkling from your eyes.

Mrs *Mar.* You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not—'twas for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that by permitting her to be engag'd, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures; and take you oftner to my arms in full security. But cou'd you think, because the nodding husband wou'd not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

Mrs *Mar.* And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with love of Mirabell.

Mrs *Mar.* 'Tis false. I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? he is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! the injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love. What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? To undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant?

Mrs *Mar.* My obligations to my Lady urg'd me; I had profeſs'd a friendſhip to her; and cou'd not ſee her eaſy nature ſo abus'd by that diſſembler.

Fain. What, was it conſcience then? Profeſs'd a friendſhip! O the pious friendſhips of the female ſex?

Mrs *Mar.* More tender, more ſincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether profeſſing love to us, or mutual faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha! you are my wife's friend too.

Mrs *Mar.* Shame and ingratitude! do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me! Have I been falſe to her, thro' ſtrict fidelity to you, and ſacrific'd my friendſhip to keep my love inviolate? And have you the baſeneſs to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? to you it ſhou'd be meritorious, that I have been vicious: and do you reflect that guilt upon me, which ſhou'd ly buried in your boſom?

Fain. You miſinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the ſlight account you once cou'd make of ſtricteſt ties, when ſet in competition with your love to me.

Mrs *Mar.* 'Tis falſe, you urg'd it with deliberate malice —'twas ſpoken in ſcorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your reſentment, begets your rage. If you yet lov'd, you cou'd forgive a jealouſy: but you are ſtung to find you are diſcover'd.

Mrs *Mar.* It ſhall be all diſcover'd. You too ſhall be diſcover'd; be ſure you ſhall. I can but be expos'd—— If I do it myſelf I ſhall prevent your baſeneſs.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs *Mar.* Diſcloſe it to your wife; own what has paſt between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs *Mar.* By all my wrongs I'll do't—I'll publiſh to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame

and fortune; with both I truſted you, you bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth.

Fain. Your fame I have preſerv'd: Your fortune has been beſtow'd as the prodigality of your love wou'd have it, in pleaſures which we both have ſhar'd. Yet, had not you been falſe, I had ere this repaid it——'tis true——had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have ſtol'n their marriage, my Lady had been incens'd beyond all means of reconcilement: Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune; which then wou'd have deſcended to my wife;————and wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a rich widow's wealth, and ſquander it on love and you?

Mrs *Mar.* Deceit and frivolous pretence!

Fain. Death, am I not married? What's pretence? Am I not impriſon'd, fetter'd? Have I not a wife? Nay a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handſome widow; and wou'd be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and ſomething of a conſtitution to buſtle thro' the ways of wedlock and this world! Will you yet be reconcil'd to truth and me?

Mrs *Mar.* Impoſſible. Truth and you are inconſiſtent——I hate you, and ſhall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs *Mar.* I loath the name of love after ſuch uſage; and next to the guilt with which you would aſperſe me, I ſcorn you moſt. Farewel.

Fain. Nay, we muſt not part thus.

Mrs *Mar.* Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm ſorry.

Mrs *Mar.* I care not—let me go——break my hands, do——I'd leave 'em to get looſe.

Fain. I wou'd not hurt you for the world. Have I no other hold to keep you here?

Mrs *Mar.* Well, I have deſerv'd it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs *Mar.* Poor diſſembling!————O that——well, is it not yet————

Fain. What? What is it not? What is it not yet? is it not yet too late———

Mrs *Mar.* No, it is not yet too late———I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mrs *Mar.* But not to loath, deteſt, abhor mankind, myſelf, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance——come, I aſk your pardon—no tears—I was to blame, I cou'd not love you and be eaſy in my doubts—pray forbear—I believe you; I'm convinc'd I've done you wrong; and any way, ev'ry way will make amends;———I'll hate my wife yet more, damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all ſhe's worth, and will retire ſomewhere, any where, to another world. I'll marry thee————be pacified————'ſdeath, they come, hide your face, your tears————you have a maſk, wear it a moment. This way, this way, be perſuaded.

SCENE IV.

MIRABELL *and* Mrs FAINALL.

Mrs *Fain.* They are here yet.

Mir. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs *Fain.* While I only hated my huſband, I cou'd bear to ſee him; but ſince I have deſpiſ'd him, he's too offenſive.

Mir. O you ſhou'd hate with prudence.

Mrs *Fain.* Yes, for I have lov'd with indiſcretion.

Mir. You ſhou'd have juſt ſo much diſguſt for your huſband, as may be ſufficient to make you reliſh your lover.

Mrs *Fain.* You have been the cauſe that I have lov'd without bounds, and wou'd you ſet limits to that averſion of which you have been the occaſion? why did you make me marry this man?

Mir. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? to save that idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produc'd that consequence of which you were apprehensive, where cou'd you have fix'd a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour, have gain'd a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excus'd, who has suffer'd herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrific'd to the occasion; a worse had not answer'd the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs *Fain.* I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

Mir. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

Mrs *Fain.* Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

Mir. Waitwell, my servant.

Mrs *Fain.* He is an humble servant to Foible my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mir. Care is taken for that—she is won and wore by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs *Fain.* Who?

Mir. Waitwell and Foible. I wou'd not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, shou'd consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in the Fox, stand upon terms; so I made him sure beforehand.

Mrs *Fain.* So, if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes; and release her by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage?

Mir. Yes, upon condition that she consent to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

Mrs *Fain.* She talk'd last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mir. That was by Foible's direction, and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs *Fain.* Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my Lady will do any thing to get an husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mir. Yes, I think the good lady wou'd marry any thing that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs *Fain.* Female frailty! we must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decay'd.

Mir. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl—'tis the green sickness of a second childhood; and like the faint offer of a latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall, and withers in an ineffectual bloom.

Mrs *Fain.* Here's your mistress.

SCENE V.

[*To them*] Mrs MILLAMANT, WITWOUD, MINCING.

Mir. Here she comes, i'faith, full sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders; ha, no, I cry her mercy.

Mrs *Fain.* I see but one poor empty sculler; and he tows her woman after him.

Mir. You seem to be unattended, Madam——you us'd to have the beau monde throng after you; and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle——I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

Mil. O I have denied myself airs to-day, I have walk'd as fast through the croud———

Wit. As a favourite juſt diſgraced; and with as few followers.

Mil. Dear Mr Witwoud, truce with your ſimilitudes; for I am as ſick of 'em——

Wit. As a phyſician of a good air—I cannot help it, Madam, though 'tis againſt myſelf.

Mil. Yet again! Mincing, ſtand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs Mincing, like a ſcreen before a great fire. I confeſs I do blaze to-day, I am too bright.

Mrs *Fain.* But, dear Millamant, why were you ſo long?

Mil. Long! Lord, have I not made violent haſte? I have aſk'd every living thing I met for you; I have enquir'd after you, as after a new faſhion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your ſimilitudes—no, you met her huſband, and did not aſk him for her.

Mir. By your leave, Witwoud, that were like enquiring after an old faſhion, to aſk a huſband for his wife.

Wit. Hum, a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confeſs it.

Mrs *Fain.* You were dreſs'd before I came abroad.

Mil. Ay, that's true——O but then I had——Mincing, what had I? why was I ſo long?

Min. O mem, your Laſhip ſtaid to peruſe a pacquet of letters.

Mil. O ay, letters—I had letters—I am perſecuted with letters—I hate letters—no body knows how to write letters, and yet one has 'em, one does not know why—they ſerve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, Madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I muſt keep copies.

Mil. Only with thoſe in verſe, Mr Witwoud, I never pin up my hair with proſe. I think I try'd once, Mincing.

Min. O mem, I ſhall never forget it.

Mil. Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

Min. 'Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem. And all to no purpose. But when your Lasship pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure and so crips.

Wit. Indeed, so crips?

Min. You're such a critic, Mr Witwoud.

Mil. Mirabell, did you take exceptions last night? O ay, and went away——now I think on't, I'm angry——no, now I think on't I'm pleas'd——for I believe I gave you some pain.

Mir. Does that please you?

Mil. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mir. You wou'd affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mil. O I ask your pardon for that——one's cruelty is in one's power; and when one parts with one's cruelty, one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mir. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your lover——and then how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome when you've lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant; for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms——your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flatter'd by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than our face.

Mil. O the vanity of these men! Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us, we were not handsome! now you must know they cou'd not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty the lover's gift——Lord, what is a lover, that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases; and then if one pleases, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of mak-

ing of lovers, Madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Mil. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo; they can but reflect what we look and say; vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mir. Yet to those two vain empty things, you owe two the greatest pleasures of your life.

Mil. How so?

Mir. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves prais'd; and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait 'till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Mil. O fiction; Fainall, let us leave these men.

Mir. Draw off Witwoud. [*Aside to* Mrs Fain.

Mrs *Fain.* Immediately; I have a word or two for Mr Witwoud.

SCENE VI.

MILLAMANT, MIRABELL, MINCING.

Mir. I wou'd beg a little private audience too——— you had the tyranny to deny me last night; though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concern'd my love.

Mil. You saw I was engag'd.

Mir. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools; things who visit you from their excessive idleness; bestowing on your easiness that time, which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they shou'd admire you, they are not capable: or if they were, it shou'd be to you as a mortification; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Mil. I pleaſe myſelf——beſides, ſometimes to converſe with fools is for my health.

Mir. Your health! is there a worſe diſeaſe than the converſation of fools?

Mil. Yes, the vapours; fools are phyſic for it, next to aſſa foetida.

Mir. You are not in a courſe of fools?

Mil. Mirabell, if you perſiſt in this offenſive freedom—you'll diſpleaſe me—I think I muſt reſolve after all, not to have you—we ſhan't agree.

Mir. Not in our phyſic, it may be.

Mil. And yet our diſtemper, in all likelihood, will be the ſame; for we ſhall be ſick of one another. I ſhan't endure to be reprimanded, nor inſtructed; 'tis ſo dull to act always by advice, and ſo tedious to be told of one's faults——I can't bear it: Well, I won't have you, Mirabell——I'm reſolv'd——I think——you may go——ha, ha, ha! what would you give, that you could help loving me?

Mir. I wou'd give ſomething that you did not know I cou'd not help it.

Mil. Come, don't look grave then. Well, what do you ſay to me?

Mir. I ſay that a man may as ſoon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honeſty, as win a woman with plain-dealing, and ſincerity.

Mil. Sententious Mirabell!—Pr'ythee, don't look with that violent and inflexible wiſe face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapeſtry hanging.

Mir. You are merry, Madam, but I would perſuade you for a moment to be ſerious.

Mil. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impoſſible I ſhou'd hold mine. Well, after all, there is ſomething very moving in a love-ſick face. Ha, ha, ha!——well, I won't laugh, don't be peeviſh——heigho! now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you will win me

woo me now—nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well;—I see you are walking away.

Mir. Can you not find in the variety of your disposition one moment———

Mil. To hear you tell me Foible's marry'd, and your plot like to speed——no.

Mir. But how you came to know it——

Mil. Without the help of the devil, you can't imagine; unless she shou'd tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

SCENE VII.

MIRABELL *alone.*

Mir. I have something more—gone—think of you? to think of a whirlwind, tho' 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation; a very tranquillity of mind and mansion A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodg'd in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turn'd; and by one as well as another; for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.——O here come my pair of turtles,——what, billing so sweetly! is not Valentine's day over with you yet?

SCENE VIII.

[*To him*] WAITWELL, FOIBLE.

Mir. Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were marry'd for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

Wait. Your pardon, Sir. With ſubmiſſion, we have indeed been ſolacing in lawful delights; but ſtill with an eye to buſineſs, Sir. I have inſtructed her as well as I could. If ſhe can take your directions as readily as my inſtructions, Sir, your affairs are in a proſperous way.

Mir. Give you joy, Mrs Foible.

Foib. O-las, Sir, I'm ſo aſham'd—I'm afraid my Lady has been in a thouſand inquietudes for me. But I proteſt, Sir, I made as much haſte as I could.

Wait. That ſhe did indeed, Sir. It was my fault that ſhe did not make more.

Mir. That I believe.

Foib. But I told my Lady as you inſtructed me, Sir, that I had a proſpect of ſeeing Sir Rowland your uncle; and that I wou'd put her Ladyſhip's picture in my pocket to ſhew him; which I'll be ſure to ſay has made him ſo enamour'd of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to ly at her Ladyſhip's feet, and worſhip the original.

Mir. Excellent Foible! matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think ſhe has profited, Sir, I think ſo.

Foib. You have ſeen Madam Millamant, Sir?

Mir. Yes.

Foib. I told her, Sir, becauſe I did not know that you might find an opportunity; ſhe had ſo much company laſt night.

Mir. Your diligence will merit more——in the mean time——— [*Gives money.*

Foib. O dear Sir, your humble ſervant.

Wait. Spouſe.

Mir. Stand off, Sir, not a penny—go on and proſper, Foible—the leaſe ſhall be made good, and the farm ſtock'd, if we ſucceed.

Foib. I don't queſtion your generoſity, Sir: and you need not doubt of ſucceſs. If you have no more commands, Sir, I'll be gone; I'm ſure my Lady is at her toilet, and can't dreſs 'till I come.———O dear, I'm ſure that [*Looking out.*] was Mrs Marwood that went by in a maſk;

If she has seen me with you I'm sure she'll tell my Lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, Sir. B'w'y, Waitwell.

SCENE IX.

MIRABELL, WAITWELL.

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please. The jade's so pert upon her preferment she forgets herself.

Mir. Come, Sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself ——and transform into Sir Rowland?

Wait. Why, Sir, it will be impossible I shou'd remember myself——marry'd, knighted and attended all in one day! 'tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self; and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I shan't be quite the same Waitwell neither—for now I remember me, I'm marry'd, and can't be my own man again.

Ay there's my grief; that's the sad change of life;
To lose my title, and yet keep my wife.

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in Lady Wishfort's *House.*

Lady WISHFORT *at her toilet,* PEG *waiting.*

LADY.

MERCIFUL! no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, Madam.

Lady. I have no more patience——if I have not fretted myself, 'till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the red——the red, do you hear, sweet-heart? An errant ash colour, as I am a person. Look you how this wench stirs! why dost thou not fetch me a little red? Didst thou not hear me, Mopus?

Peg. The red Ratafia does your Ladyſhip mean, or the cherry-brandy?

Lady. Ratafia, fool! no, fool. Not the Ratafia, fool ———grant me patience! I mean the Spaniſh paper, idiot, complexion, darling. Paint, paint, paint, doſt thou underſtand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? why doſt thou not ſtart, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires.

Peg. Lord, Madam, your Ladyſhip is ſo impatient—— I cannot come at the paint, Madam, Mrs Foible has lock'd it up, and carry'd the key with her.

Lady. A pox take you both——fetch me the cherry-brandy then.

SCENE II.

Lady WISHFORT.

I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs Qualmſick the curate's wife, that's always breeding———wench, come, come, wench, what art thou doing? ſipping? taſting? Save thee, doſt thou not know the bottle?

SCENE III.

Lady WISHFORT, PEG *with a bottle and China cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

Lady. A cup, ſave thee, and what a cup haſt thou brought! doſt thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? Why didſt thou not bring thy thimble? Haſt thou ne'er a braſs thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come, fill, fill.———So———— again. See who that is———[*One knocks.*] Set down the bottle firſt———here, here, under the table———what, would'ſt thou go with the bottle in thy hand like a tapſter? As I am a perſon, this wench has liv'd in an inn upon the

road, before she came to me, like Maritornes the Austrian in Don Quixote. No Foible yet?

Peg. No, Madam, Mrs Marwood.

Lady. O Marwood, let her come in. Come in, good Marwood.

SCENE IV.

[*To them*] Mrs MARWOOD.

Mrs *Mar.* I'm surpriz'd to find your Ladyship in dishabille at this time of day.

Lady. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs *Mar.* I saw her but now, as I came mask'd thro' the park, in conference with Mirabell.

Lady. With Mirabell! you call my blood into my face, with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence. I sent her to negotiate an affair, in which if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruin'd. O my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected.

Mrs *Mar.* O Madam, you cannot suspect Mrs Foible's integrity.

Lady. O, he carries poison in his tongue that wou'd corrupt integrity itself. If she has giv'n him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity?——Hark! I hear her———dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom——you'll pardon me, dear friend, I can make bold with you——there are books over the chimney———Quarles and Pryn, and The short View of the Stage, with Bunyan's works, to entertain you.——Go, you thing, and send her in. [*To Peg.*

SCENE V.

Lady WISHFORT, FOIBLE.

Lady. O Foible, where haſt thou been? what haſt thou been doing?

Foib. Madam, I have ſeen the party.

Lady. But what haſt thou done?

Foib. Nay, 'tis your Ladyſhip has done, and are to do; I have only promiſed. But a man ſo enamour'd—ſo tranſported! well, if worſhipping of pictures be a ſin——poor Sir Rowland, I ſay.

Lady. The miniature has been counted like—but haſt thou not betray'd me, Foible? Haſt thou not detected me to that faithleſs Mirabell?—What hadſt thou to do with him in the park? Anſwer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foib. So, the devil has been beforehand with me. What ſhall I ſay?——Alas, Madam, could I help it, if I met that confident thing? Was I in fault? If you had heard how he us'd me, and all upon your Ladyſhip's account, I'm ſure you would not ſuſpect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worſt, I could have borne: but he had a fling at your Ladyſhip too; and then I could not hold; but i'faith I gave him his own.

Lady. Me? what did the filthy fellow ſay?

Foib. O Madam, 'tis a ſhame to ſay what he ſaid—— with his taunts and his ſleers, toſſing up his noſe. Humph (ſays he) what, you are a hatching ſome plot (ſays he) you are ſo early abroad, or catering (ſays he) ferreting for ſome diſbanded officer, I warrant——half pay is but thin ſubſiſtence (ſays he)—well, what penſion does your lady propoſe? Let me ſee (ſays he) what, ſhe muſt come down pretty deep now, ſhe's ſuperannuated (ſays he) and——

Lady. Odds my life, I'll have him, I'll have him murder'd. I'll have him poiſon'd. Where does he eat? I'll marry

a drawer to have him poiſon'd in his wine. I'll ſend for Robin from Locket's—immediately.

Foib. Poiſon him! poiſoning's too good for him. Starve him, Madam, ſtarve him; marry Sir Rowland, and get him diſinherited. O you wou'd bleſs yourſelf to hear what he ſaid.

Lady. A villain! ſuperannuated!

Foib. Humph (ſays he) I hear you are laying deſigns againſt me too (ſays he) and Mrs Millamant is to marry my uncle; (he does not ſuſpect a word of your Ladyſhip;) but (ſays he) I'll fit you for that. I warrant you (ſays he) I'll hamper you for that (ſays he) you and your old frippery too (ſays he) I'll handle you——

Lady. Audacious villain! handle me, wou'd he durſt—frippery? old frippery! was there ever ſuch a foul-mouth'd fellow? I'll be married to-morrow, I'll be contracted to-night.

Foib. The ſooner the better, Madam.

Lady. Will Sir Rowland be here, ſay'ſt thou? when, Foible?

Foib. Incontinently, Madam. No new ſheriff's wife expects the return of her huſband after knighthood, with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kiſſing your Ladyſhip's hand after dinner.

Lady. Frippery? ſuperannuated frippery! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags: a tatterdemalion———I hope to ſee him hung with tatters, like a Long-Lane pent-houſe, or a gibbet thief. A ſlandermouth'd railer: I warrant the ſpendthrift prodigal's in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birth-day. I'll ſpoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he ſhall have my niece with her fortune, he ſhall.

Foib. He! I hope to ſee him lodge in Ludgate firſt, and angle into Black-friars for braſs farthings, with an old mitten.

Lady. Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I ſhall never recompoſe my features, to receive Sir Rowland with an œconomy

of face. This wretch has fretted me that I am abſolutely decay'd. Look, Foible.

Foib. Your Ladyſhip has frown'd a little too raſhly, indeed, Madam. There are ſome cracks diſcernible in the white varniſh.

Lady. Let me ſee the glaſs————cracks ſay'ſt thou? Why, I am errantly flea'd————I look like an old peel'd wall. Thou muſt repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes; or I ſhall never keep up to my picture.

Foib. I warrant you, Madam; a little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the ſame art muſt make you like your picture. Your picture muſt ſit for you, Madam.

Lady. But art thou ſure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? Or will he not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, Foible, and puſh? For if he ſhould not be importunate—I ſhall never break decorums—I ſhall die with confuſion, if I'm forc'd to advance.—Oh no, I can never advance————I ſhall ſwoon if he ſhould expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred, than to put a lady to the neceſſity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy neither.——I won't give him deſpair————but a little diſdain is not amiſs; a little ſcorn is alluring.

Foib. A little ſcorn becomes your Ladyſhip.

Lady. Yes, but tenderneſs becomes me beſt————a ſort of a dyingneſs—you ſee that picture has a ſort of a——ha, Foible! a ſwimmingneſs in the eyes—yes, I'll look ſo——my niece affects it; but ſhe wants features. Is Sir Rowland handſome? Let my toilet be remov'd————I'll dreſs above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handſome? Don't anſwer me. I won't know: I'll be ſurpriz'd, I'll be taken by ſurprize.

Foib. By ſtorm, Madam. Sir Rowland's a briſk man.

Lady. Is he! O then he'll importune, if he's a briſk man. I ſhall ſave decorums if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehenſion of offending againſt decorums. O I'm glad he's a briſk man. Let my things be remov'd, good Foible.

SCENE VI.

Mrs FAINALL, FOIBLE.

Mrs *Fain.* O Foible, I have been in a fright, leſt I ſhou'd come too late. That devil Marwood, ſay you, in the park with Mirabell? and I'm afraid will diſcover it to my Lady.

Foib. Diſcover what, Madam?

Mrs *Fain* Nay, nay, put not on that ſtrange face, I am privy to the whole deſign, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to perſonate Mirabell's uncle, and as ſuch, winning my Lady, to involve her in thoſe difficulties from which Mirabell only muſt releaſe her, by his making his conditions to have my couſin and her fortune left to her own diſpoſal.

Foib. O dear Madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your Ladyſhip that was deficient; but I thought the former good correſpondence between your Ladyſhip and Mr Mirabell, might have hindered his communicating this ſecret.

Mrs *Fain.* Dear Foible, forget that.

Foib. O dear Madam, Mr Mirabell is ſuch a ſweet winning gentleman—but your Ladyſhip is the pattern of generoſity.——Sweet Lady, to be ſo good! Mr Mirabell cannot chooſe but be grateful. I find your Ladyſhip has his heart ſtill. Now, Madam, I can ſafely tell your Ladyſhip our ſucceſs; Mrs Marwood had told my Lady; but I warrant I manag'd myſelf. I turn'd it all for the better. I told my Lady that Mr Mirabell railed at her; I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my Lady is ſo incens'd that ſhe'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, ſhe ſays;———I warrant I work'd her up, that he may have her for aſking for, as they ſay of a Welſh maidenhead.

Mrs *Fain.* O rare Foible!

Foib. Madam, I beg your Ladyſhip to acquaint Mr Mi-

rabell of his ſucceſs. I wou'd be ſeen as little as poſſible to ſpeak to him——beſides, I believe, Madam Marwood watches me.———She has a month's mind; but I know Mr Mirabell can't abide her.———[*Calls*] John———— remove my Lady's toilet. Madam, your ſervant. My Lady is ſo impatient, I fear ſhe'll come for me if I ſtay.

Mrs *Fain.* I'll go with you up the back-ſtairs, leſt I ſhou'd meet her.

SCENE VII.

Mrs MARWOOD *alone.*

Indeed, Mrs Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? yes, I ſhall watch you. Why this wench is the Paſs-par-toute, a very maſter-key to every body's ſtrong box. My friend Fainall, have you carried it ſo ſwimmingly? I thought there was ſomething in it; but it ſeems 'tis over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite then, but from a ſurfeit. Elſe you could never be ſo cool to fall from a principal to be an aſſiſtant; to procure for him! a pattern of generoſity, that, I confeſs. Well, Mr Fainall, you have met with your match.———O man, man! woman, woman! the devil's an aſs: if I were a painter, I would draw him like an ideot, a driveler with a bib and bells. A man ſhou'd have his head and horns, and woman the reſt of him. Poor ſimple fiend! Madam Marwood has a month's mind, but he cannot abide her———'twere better for him you had not been his confeſſor in that affair; without you could have kept his counſel cloſer. I ſhall not prove another pattern of generoſity—he has not obliged me to that with thoſe exceſſes of himſelf; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good Lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chymiſt upon the day of projection.

SCENE VIII.

[*To her*] Lady WISHFORT.

Lady. O dear Marwood, what ſhall I ſay for this rude forgetfulneſs——but my dear friend is all goodneſs.

Mrs *Mar.* No apologies, dear Madam, I have been very well entertained.

Lady. As I'm a perſon, I am in a very chaos to think I ſhould ſo forget myſelf——but I have ſuch an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do——[*Calls.*]—Foible—I expect my nephew Sir Wilfull ev'ry moment too:——Why, Foible—he means to travel for improvement.

Mrs *Mar.* Methinks Sir Willful ſhould rather think of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is turn'd of forty.

Lady. O he's in leſs danger of being ſpoil'd by his travels——I am againſt my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquir'd diſcretion to chooſe for himſelf.

Mrs *Mar.* Methinks Mrs Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards. 'Tis a thing very uſual with young gentlemen.

Lady. I promiſe you I have thought on't—and ſince 'tis your judgment, I think on't again. I aſſure you I will; I value your judgment extremely. On my word, I'll propoſe it.

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] FOIBLE.

Lady. Come, come, Foible——I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner——I muſt make haſte.

Foib. Mr Witwoud and Mr Petulant are come to dine with your Ladyſhip.

Lady. O dear, I can't appear 'till I'm dreſs'd. Dear Marwood, ſhall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em. I'll make all imaginable haſte. Dear friend, excuſe me.

SCENE X.

Mrs MARWOOD, Mrs MILLAMANT, MINCING.

Mil. Sure never any thing was ſo unbred as that odious man——Marwood, your ſervant.

Mrs *Mar.* You have a colour; what's the matter?

Mil. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provok'd me into a flame——I have broken my fan——Mincing, lend me yours; is not all the powder out of my hair?

Mrs *Mar.* No, what has he done?

Mil. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talked—nay, he has ſaid nothing neither; but he has contradicted ev'ry thing that has been ſaid. For my part, I thought Witwoud and he would have quarrel'd.

Min. I vow, Mem, I thought once they would have fit.

Mil. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I ſwear, that one has not the liberty of chooſing one's acquaintance as one does one's clothes.

Mrs *Mar.* If we had that liberty, we ſhould be as weary of one ſet of acquaintance, tho' never ſo good, as we are of one ſuit, tho' never ſo fine. A fool and a doily ſtuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Mil. I could conſent to wear 'em, if they would wear alike; but fools never wear out——they are ſuch drap-deberry things! without one could give 'em to one's chamber-maid after a day or two.

Mrs *Mar.* 'Twere better ſo indeed. Or what think you of the play-houſe? A fine gay gloſſy fool ſhou'd be given there, like a new maſking habit, after the maſquerade is over, and we have done with the diſguiſe. For

a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would appear barefac'd now, and own Mirabell; you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwoud as your hood and scarf. And indeed, 'tis time, for the town has found it: the secret is grown too big for the pretence. 'Tis like Mrs Primly's great belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips. Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady Strammel can her face, that goodly face, which in defiance of her Rhenish wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

Mil. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decay'd beauty, or a discarded toast. Mincing, tell the men they may come up. My aunt is not dressing here; their folly is less provoking than your malice.

SCENE XI.

MILLAMANT, MARWOOD.

Mil. The town has found it! what has it found? That Mirabell loves me is no more a secret, than it is a secret that you discovered it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

Mrs *Mar.* You are nettled.

Mil. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs *Mar.* Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

Mil. O silly! ha, ha, ha! I could laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell! his constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside. I swear, I never enjoin'd it him to be so coy——If I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to shew more gallantry———'tis hardly well bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own

way. Ha, ha, ha! pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh, ha, ha, ha! tho' I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs *Mar.* What pity 'tis so much fine raillery, and delivered with so significant gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

Mil. Ha! dear creature, I ask your pardon——I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs *Mar.* Mr Mirabell and you both may think it a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you——

Mil. O dear, what? for it is the same thing if I hear it——ha, ha, ha!

Mrs *Mar.* That I detest him, hate him, Madam.

Mil. O, Madam, why so do I——and yet the creature loves me, ha, ha, ha! how can one forbear laughing to think of it——I am a Sybil if I am not amaz'd to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer—and within a year or two as young—if you could but stay for me, I should overtake you——but that cannot be.—Well, that thought makes me melancholic.—Now, I'll be sad.

Mrs *Mar.* Your merry note may be chang'd sooner than you think.

Mil. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolv'd I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

SCENE XII.

[*To them*] MINCING.

Minc. The gentlemen stay but to comb, Madam, and will wait on you.

Mil. Desire Mrs——that is in the next room to sing the song I would have learn'd yesterday. You shall hear it, Madam——not that there's any great matter in't—but 'tis agreeable to my humour.

S O N G.

Set by Mr John Eccles.

I.

LOVE's but the frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition join'd;
A ſickly flame, which, if not fed, expires,
And feeding, waſtes in ſelf-conſuming fires.

II.

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy,
Or am'rous youth, that gives the joy;
But 'tis the glory to have pierc'd a ſwain,
For whom inferior beauties ſigh'd in vain.

III.

Then I alone the conqueſt prize,
When I inſult a rival's eyes:
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I ſee
That heart, which others bleed for, bleed for me.

S C E N E XIII.

[*To them*] PETULANT, WITWOUD.

Mil. Is your animoſity compos'd, gentlemen?

Wit. Rallery, rallery, Madam; we have no animoſity ——we hit off a little wit now and then, but no animoſity——the falling out of wits is like the falling out of lovers——we agree in the main, like treble and baſe. Ha, Petulant?

Pet. Ay, in the main——but when I have the humour to contradict——

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battle-dores; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black's black——if I have a humour to say 'tis blue——let that pass——all's one for that. If I have a humour to prove it, it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must————but it may————it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, Madam.

Mrs *Mar.* I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs *Mar.* That's a sign indeed 'tis no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, 'tis no enemy to any body, but them that have it.

Mil. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion: I wonder at the impudence of an illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Mil. Ah! to marry an ignorant! that can hardly read or write

Pet. Why should a man be any further from being marry'd, though he can't read, than he is from being hang'd. The ordinary's paid for setting the psalm, and the parish-priest for reading the ceremony. And for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book ————so all's one for that.

Mil. D'ye hear the creature? Lord, here's company, I'll be gone.

SCENE XIV.

Sir WILFULL WITWOUD *in a riding dreſs,* Mrs MARWOOD, PETULANT, WITWOUD, FOOTMAN.

Wit. In the name of Bartlemew and his fair, what have we here?

Mrs *Mar.* 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I——Yes, I think it is he——I've almoſt forgot him; I have not ſeen him ſince the revolution.

Foot. Sir, my Lady's dreſſing. Here's company; if you pleaſe to walk in, in the mean time.

Sir *Wilf.* Dreſſing! what, 'tis but morning here, I warrant, with you in London; we ſhou'd count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropſhire——why then, belike, my aunt han't din'd yet——ha, friend?

Foot. Your aunt, Sir?

Sir *Wilf.* My aunt, Sir; yes, my aunt, Sir, and your Lady, Sir; your Lady is my aunt, Sir——why, what doſt thou not know me, friend? Why then ſend ſomebody hither that does. How long haſt thou liv'd with thy Lady, fellow, ha?

Foot. A week, Sir; longer than any body in the houſe, except my Lady's woman.

Sir *Wilf.* Why then belike thou doſt not know thy Lady, if thou ſee'ſt her, ha, friend?

Foot. Why truly, Sir, I cannot ſafely ſwear to her face in a morning, before ſhe is dreſs'd. 'Tis like I may give a ſhrewd gueſs at her by this time.

Sir *Wilf.* Well, pr'ythee try what thou can'ſt do; if thou canſt not gueſs, enquire her out, doſt hear, fellow? and tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilfull Witwoud, is in the houſe.

Foot. I ſhall, Sir.

Sir *Wilf.* Hold ye, hear me, friend; a word with you in your ear; pr'ythee who are theſe gallants?

Foot. Really, Sir, I can't tell; here come ſo many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all.

SCENE XV.

Sir WILFULL WITWOUD, PETULANT, WITWOUD, Mrs MARWOOD.

Sir *Wilf.* Oons, this fellow knows leſs than a ſtarling; I don't think a' knows his own name.

Mrs *Mar.* Mr Witwoud, your brother is not behindhand in forgetfulneſs——I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope ſo——the devil take him that remembers firſt, I ſay.

Sir *Wilf.* Save you, gentlemen and lady.

Mrs *Mar.* For ſhame, Mr Witwoud; why won't you ſpeak to him?——And you, Sir.

Wit. Petulant, ſpeak.

Pet. And you, Sir.

Sir *Wilf.* No offence, I hope. [*Salutes* Marwood.

Mrs *Mar.* No ſure, Sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I ſee that already. No offence! ha, ha, ha! to him; to him, Petulant, ſmoke him.

Pet. It ſeems as if you had come a journey, Sir; hem, hem. [*Surveying him round.*

Sir *Wilf.* Very likely, Sir, that it may ſeem ſo.

Pet. No offence, I hope, Sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots; Petulant, the boots; ha, ha, ha!

Sir *Wilf.* May be not, Sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, Sir.

Pet. Sir, I preſume upon the information of your boots.

Sir *Wilf.* Why, 'tis like you may, Sir: if you are not ſatisfy'd with the information of my boots, Sir, if you will ſtep to the ſtable, you may enquire further of my horſe, Sir.

Pet. Your horſe, Sir! your horſe is an aſs, Sir!

Sir *Wilf.* Do you ſpeak by way of offence, Sir?

Mrs *Mar.* The gentleman's merry, that's all, Sir——S'life, we ſhall have a quarrel betwixt an horſe and an aſs before they find one another out. You muſt not take any thing amiſs from your friends, Sir. You are among your friends here, tho' it may be you don't know it——If I am not miſtaken, you are Sir Wilfull Witwoud.

Sir *Wilf.* Right, Lady; I am Sir Wilfull Witwoud, ſo I write myſelf; no offence to any body, I hope; and nephew to the Lady Wiſhfort of this manſion.

Mrs *Mar.* Don't you know this gentleman, Sir?

Sir *Wilf.* Hum! what, ſure 'tis not—yea by'r Lady, but 'tis——'Sheart, I know not whether 'tis or no———yea, but 'tis, by the Rekin. Brother Antony! what, Tony, i'faith! what, doſt thou not know me? By'r Lady, nor I thee, thou art ſo becravated, and ſo beperiwig'd———'Sheart, why doſt thou not ſpeak? art thou overjoy'd?

Wit. Odſo, brother, is it you? your ſervant, brother.

Sir *Wilf.* Your ſervant! why yours, Sir. Your ſervant again—'Sheart, and your friend and ſervant to that—and a—[*puff*] and a flap dragon for your ſervice, Sir: and a hare's foot, and a hare's ſcut for your ſervice, Sir; and you be ſo cold and ſo courtly.

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir *Wilf.* 'Sheart, Sir, but there is, and much offence ———a pox, is this your inns o' court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders and your betters!

Wit. Why, brother Wilfull of Salop, you may be as ſhort as a Shrewſbury-cake, if you pleaſe. But I tell you 'tis not modiſh to know relations in town: you think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers ſlabber and kiſs one another when they meet, like a call of ſerjeants———'tis not the faſhion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

Sir *Wilf.* The faſhion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've ſuſpected this———by'r lady, I con-

jectur'd you were a fop, ſince you began to change the ſtyle of your letters, and write in a ſcrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a ſubpœna. I might expect this when you left off, "honour'd brother;" and "hoping "you are in good health," and ſo forth——to begin with a "rat me, knight, I'm ſo ſick of a laſt night's debauch"—'ods heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and ſo conclude——you could write news before you were out of your time. When you liv'd with honeſt Pumple Noſe the attorney of Furnival's inn——you cou'd intreat to be remember'd then to your friends round the Rekin. We could have gazettes, then, and Dawks's letter, and the weekly bill, 'till of late days.

Pet. 'Slife, Witwoud, were you ever an attorney's clerk? of the family of the Furnivals. Ha, ha, ha!

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while: not long, not long; pſhaw, I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to conſent to that, man, to come to London. He had the diſpoſal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewſbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir *Wilf.* 'Sheart, and better than to be bound to a maker of fops; where, I ſuppoſe, you have ſerv'd your time; and now you may ſet up for yourſelf.

Mrs *Mar.* You intend to travel, Sir, as I'm inform'd.

Sir *Wilf.* Belike I may, Madam. I may chance to ſail upon the ſalt-ſeas, if my mind hold.

Pet. And the wind ſerve.

Sir *Wilf.* Serve or not ſerve, I ſhan't aſk licenſe of you, Sir; nor the weather-cock your companion. I direct my diſcourſe to the Lady, Sir; 'tis like my aunt may have told you, Madam——yes, I have ſettled my concerns, I may ſay now, and am minded to ſee foreign parts. If an how that the peace holds, whereby that is taxes abate.

Mrs *Mar.* I thought you had deſign'd for France at all adventures.

Sir *Wilf.* I can't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am ſomewhat dainty in making a reſolution ——becauſe when I make it I keep it. I don't ſtand ſhill I, ſhall I, then; if I ſay't I'll do't; but I have thoughts to tarry a ſmall matter in town, to learn ſomewhat of your lingo firſt, before I croſs the ſeas. I'd gladly have a ſpice of your French as they ſay, whereby to hold diſcourſe in foreign countries.

Mrs *Mar.* Here's an academy in town for that uſe.

Sir *Wilf.* There is? 'Tis like there may.

Mrs *Mar.* No doubt you will return very much improv'd.

Wit. Yes, refin'd like a Dutch ſkipper from a whale-fiſhing.

SCENE XVI.

[*To them*] Lady WISHFORT, *and* FAINALL.

Lady. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir *Wilf.* Aunt, your ſervant.

Fain. Sir Wilfull, your moſt humble ſervant.

Sir *Wilf.* Couſin Fainall, give me your hand.

Lady. Couſin Witwoud, your ſervant; Mr Petulant, your ſervant—nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any thing after your journey, nephew, before you eat? Dinner's almoſt ready.

Sir *Wilf.* I'm very well, I thank you, aunt——however, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart, I was afraid you wou'd have been in the faſhion too, and have remember'd to have forgot your relations. Here's your Couſin Tony, belike, I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence.

Lady. O he's a railer, nephew———my couſin's a wit: and your great wits always rally their beſt friends to chuſe.

When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better.

[Fain. *and* Mrs Mar. *talk apart.*

Sir *Wilf.* Why then let him hold his tongue in the mean time; and rail when that day comes.

SCENE XVII.

[*To them*] MINCING.

Min. Mem, I come to acquaint your Lasship that dinner is impatient.

Sir *Wilf.* Impatient! Why then belike it won't stay till I pull off my boots. Sweet-heart, can you help me to a pair of slippers?———My man's with his horses, I warrant.

Lady. Fy, fy, nephew, you would not pull off your boots here—go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you—my nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, Madam—gentlemen, will you walk? Marwood?

Mrs *Mar.* I'll follow you, Madam—before Sir Wilfull's ready.

SCENE XVIII.

MARWOOD, FAINALL.

Fain. Why then Foible's a bawd, an errant, rank, match-making bawd. And I it seems am a husband, a rank husband; and my wife a very errant, rank wife——all in the Way of the World. 'Sdeath, to be a cuckold by anticipation, a cuckold in embryo! sure I was born with budding antlers, like a young satyr, or a citizen's child. 'Sdeath to be out-witted, to be out-jilted—out-matrimony'd—if I had kept my speed like a stag, 'twere somewhat,—but to crawl after, with my horns, like a snail, and be outstripped by my wife——'tis scurvy wedlock.

Mrs *Mar.* Then shake it off; you have often wish'd

for an opportunity to part——and now you have it. But first prevent their plot———the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with, to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. Damn him, that had been mine——had you not made that fond discovery—that had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my horns, by that increase of fortune, I cou'd have worn 'em tipt with gold, though my forehead had been furnish'd like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

Mrs *Mar.* They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her——I dare swear she had given up her game, before she was married.

Fain. Hum! that may be——

Mrs *Mar.* You married her to keep you; and if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means.

Mrs *Mar.* Discover to my Lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her—my Lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My Lady will be enrag'd beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece, and fortune, and all at that conjuncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. Faith, this has an appearance.

Mrs *Mar.* I'm sorry I hinted to my Lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilfull: that may be an obstacle.

Fain. O, for that matter, leave me to manage him; I'll disable him for that; he will drink like a Dane; after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs *Mar.* Well, how do you stand affected towards your Lady?

Fain. Why, faith, I'm thinking of it—Let me see—I am married already, so that's over—my wife has play'd the jade with me—well, that's over too—I never lov'd her, or if I had, why that wou'd have been over too by this time—jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy. Weary of her I am, and shall be——no, there's no end of that? no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation——As to my own, I married not for it, so that's out of the question—and as to my part in my wife's—why, she had parted with hers before; so bringing none to me, she can take none from me; 'tis against all the rule of play, that I should lose to one, who has not wherewithal to stake.

Mrs *Mar.* Besides, you forget, marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum, faith, and that's well thought on; marriage is honourable as you say; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being derived from so honourable a root?

Mrs *Mar.* Nay, I know not; if the root be honourable, why not the branches?

Fain. So, so, why this point's clear——well, how do we proceed?

Mrs *Mar.* I will contrive a letter which shall be deliver'd to my Lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand——for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provok'd if I could help it—because you know she knows some passages—nay, I expect all will come out—but let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discover'd.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst—I'll turn my wife to grass—I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate; which I wheedled out of her; and that you shall partake at least.

Mrs *Mar.* I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now: you'll be no more jealous?

Fain. Jealous, no——by this kiſs——let huſbands be jealous; but let the lover ſtill believe; or if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleaſure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his miſtreſs true. But let huſbands doubts convert to endleſs jealouſy; or if they have belief, let it corrupt to ſuperſtition, and blind credulity. I am ſingle, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge, but I'll diſown the order. And ſince I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common creſt.

All huſbands muſt or pain or ſhame endure;
The wiſe too jealous are, fools too ſecure.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *continues.*

Lady WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

LADY.

IS Sir Rowland coming, ſay'ſt thou, Foible? and are things in order?

Foib. Yes, Madam. I have put wax lights in the ſconces, and plac'd the footmen in a row in the hall, in their beſt liveries, with the coachman and poſtilion to fill up the equipage.

Lady. Have you pulvill'd the coachman and poſtilion, that they may not ſtink of the ſtable, when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foib. Yes, Madam.

Lady. And are the dancers and the muſic ready, that he may be entertain'd in all points with correſpondence to his paſſion?

Foib. All is ready, Madam.

Lady. And—well—and how do I look, Foible?

Foib. Moſt killing well, Madam.

Lady. Well, and how ſhall I receive him? in what figure ſhall I give his heart the firſt impreſſion? There is a great deal in the firſt impreſſion: ſhall I ſit?—No, I won't ſit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him——no, that will be too ſudden. I'll ly——ay, I'll ly down———I'll receive him in my little dreſſing-room, there's a couch———yes, yes, I'll give the firſt impreſſion on a couch——I won't ly neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow: with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way———yes———and then as ſoon as he appears, ſtart, ay, ſtart and be ſurpriz'd, and riſe to meet him in a pretty diſorder ——yes——O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch, in ſome confuſion——it ſhews the foot to advantage, and furniſhes with bluſhes, and recompoſing airs beyond compariſon. Hark! there's a coach.

Foib. 'Tis he, Madam.

Lady. O dear, has my nephew made his addreſſes to Millamant? I order'd him.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is ſet in to drinking, Madam, in the parlour.

Lady. Odds my life, I'll ſend him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll ſend him as I go—when they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland.

SCENE II.

Mrs MILLAMANT, Mrs FAINALL, FOIBLE.

Foib. Madam, I ſtay'd here, to tell your Ladyſhip that Mr Mirabell has waited this half hour, for an opportunity to talk with you; though my Lady's orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfull together. Shall I tell Mr Mirabell that you are at leiſure?

Mil. No,——what would the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself——bid him come another time.

There never yet was woman made,
Nor shall but to be curs'd.

[*Repeating, and walking about.*

That's hard!

Mrs *Fain.* You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

Mil He? Ay, and filthy verses——so I am.

Foib. Sir Wilfull is coming, Madam. Shall I send Mr Mirabell away?

Mil. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away——or send him hither—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—shall I? Ay, let the wretch come.

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train.

[*Repeating.*

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull——thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool, thou art marry'd and hast patience ——I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs *Fain.* I am oblig'd to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

SCENE III.

[*To them*] Sir WILFULL.

Mrs *Fain.* O Sir Wilfull; you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point, now or never.

Sir *Wilf.* Yes; my aunt would have it so—I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I am acquainted;——[*This while* Millamant *walks about repeating to herself.*]—— But I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind——tha

is, upon further acquaintance—ſo for the preſent, couſin, I'll take my leave——if ſo be you'll be ſo kind to make my excuſe, I'll return to my company———

Mrs *Fain.* O fy, Sir Wilfull! what, you muſt not be daunted.

Sir *Wilf.* Daunted, no, that's not it, it is not ſo much for that——for if ſo be that I ſet on't, I'll do't. But only for the preſent, 'tis ſufficient 'till further acquaintance, that's all——your ſervant.

Mrs *Fain.* Nay, I'll ſwear you ſhall never loſe ſo favourable an oppportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door.

SCENE IV.

Sir WILFULL, MILLAMANT.

Sir *Wilf.* Nay, nay, couſin—I have forgot my gloves—what d'ye do? 'Sheart, a'has lock'd the door indeed, I think—nay, couſin Fainall, open the door—p'ſhaw, what a vixon trick is this?—nay, now a'has ſeen me too—couſin, I made bold to paſs thro' as it were——I think this door's inchanted——

Mil. repeating.]

I pr'ythee ſpare me, gentle boy,
Preſs me no more for that ſlight toy.

Sir *Wilf.* Anan? Couſin, your ſervant.

Mil. ——— *That fooliſh trifle of a heart*————Sir Wilfull!

Sir *Wilf.* Yes———your ſervant. No offence, I hope, couſin.

Mil. repeating.]

I ſwear it will not do it's part,
Tho' thou doſt thine, employ'ſt thy power and art.

Natural, eaſy Suckling!

Sir *Wilf.* Anan? Suckling? No ſuch ſuckling, neither, couſin, nor ſtripling: I thank Heav'n, I'm no minor.

Mil. Ah ruſtic, ruder than Gothic!

Sir *Wilf.* Well, well, I ſhall underſtand your lingo one of theſe days, couſin, in the mean while I muſt anſwer in plain Engliſh.

Mil. Have you any buſineſs with me, Sir Wilfull?

Sir *Wilf.* Not at preſent, couſin——yes, I make bold to ſee, to come and know if that how you were diſpoſed to fetch a walk this evening, if ſo be that I might not be troubleſome, I would have ſought a walk with you.

Mil. A walk? What then?

Sir *Wilf.* Nay, nothing——only for the walk's ſake, that's all——

Mil. I nauſeate walking; 'tis a country diverſion; I loath the country, and every thing that relates to it.

Sir *Wilf.* Indeed! hah! look ye, look ye, you do? nay, 'tis like you may——here are choice of paſtimes here in town, as plays, and the like, that muſt be confeſſed indeed——

Mil. Ah, l'etourdie! I hate the town too.

Sir *Wilf.* Dear heart, that's much——hah! that you ſhould hate 'em both! hah! 'tis like you may; there are ſome can't reliſh the town, and others can't away with the country——'tis like you may be one of thoſe, couſin.

Mil. Ha, ha, ha! yes, 'tis like I may.——You have nothing further to ſay to me?

Sir *Wilf.* Not at preſent, couſin——'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in ſome meaſure—I conjecture you partly gueſs——however, that's as time ſhall try—but ſpare to ſpeak and ſpare to ſpeed, as they ſay.

Mil. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me to leave me; I have juſt now a little buſineſs——

Sir *Wilf.* Enough, enough, couſin: yes, yes, all a caſe——when you're diſpos'd: Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that——yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no

haſte; it will keep cold, as they ſay—couſin, your ſervant ——I think this door's lock'd.

Mil. You may go this way, Sir.

Sir Wilf. Your ſervant, then with your leave I'll return to my company.

Mil. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha!

Like Phœbus *ſung the no leſs am'rous boy.*

SCENE V.

MILLAMANT, MIRABELL.

Mir. ——*Like* Daphne *ſhe, as lovely and as coy.* Do you lock yourſelf up from me, to make my ſearch more curious? Or is this pretty artifice contriv'd, to ſignify that here the chace muſt end, and my purſuit be crown'd? For you can fly no further.——

Mil. Vanity! no———I'll fly, and be follow'd to the laſt moment. Tho' I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you ſhould ſolicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monaſtery, with one foot over the threſhold. I'll be ſolicited to the very laſt, nay, and afterwards.

Mir. What, after the laſt?

Mil. O, I ſhould think I was poor and had nothing to beſtow, if I were reduc'd to an inglorious eaſe, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of ſolicitation.

Mir. But do you not know, that when favours are conferr'd upon inſtant and tedious ſolicitation, that they diminiſh in their value, and that both the giver loſes the grace, and the receiver leſſens his pleaſure.

Mil. It may be in things of common application; but never ſure in love. O, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air, independent on the bounty of his miſtreſs. There is not ſo impudent a thing in nature, as the ſaucy look of an aſſured man, confident of ſucceſs. The pedantic arrogance of a very huſband

has not so pragmatical an air. Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mir. Wou'd you have 'em both before marriage? Or will you be contented with the first now, and stay for the other 'till after grace?

Mil. Ah! don't be impertinent——my dear liberty, shall I leave thee? my faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu—my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin*, adieu.——I can't do't, 'tis more than impossible——positively, Mirabell, I'll ly a-bed in a morning as long as I please.

Mir. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Mil. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will——and d'ye hear, I won't be call'd names after I'm married; positively I won't be call'd names.

Mir. Names!

Mil. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweet-heart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar——I shall never bear that—good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler, and Sir Francis: nor go to Hyde-Park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers, and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and asham'd of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well-bred: let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well bred as if we were not married at all.

Mir. Have you any more conditions to offer? Hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

Mil. Trifles——as liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please; and chuse conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to con-

verſe with wits that I don't like, becauſe they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, becauſe they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I pleaſe; dine in my dreſſing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reaſon. To have my cloſet inviolate; to be ſole empreſs of my tea-table, which you muſt never preſume to approach without firſt aſking leave. And, laſtly, where-ever I am, you ſhall always knock at the door before you come in. Theſe articles ſubſcrib'd, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

Mir. Your bill of fare is ſomething advanc'd in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond meaſure enlarg'd into a huſband.

Mil. You have free leave; propoſe your utmoſt, ſpeak and ſpare not.

Mir. I thank you. *Imprimis* then, I covenant, that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no ſworn confident, or intimate of your own ſex; no ſhe friend to ſkreen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual ſecrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you a fop-ſcrambling to the play in a maſk—then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you ſhall be found out——and rail at me for miſſing the play, and diſappointing the frolic which you had to pick me up, and prove my conſtancy.

Mil. Deteſtible *imprimis!* I go to the play in a maſk!

Mir. Item, I article, that you continue to like your own face, as long as I ſhall: and while it paſſes current with me, that you endeavour not to new-coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all maſks for the night, made of oil'd-ſkins, and I know not what——hogs bones, hares gall, pig-water, and the marrow of a roaſted cat. In ſhort, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in what-d'ye-call-it court. Item, I ſhut my doors againſt all bawds with baſkets, and penny-

worths of muſlin, china, fans, atlaſſes, etc.——Item, when you ſhall be breeding———

Mil. Ah! name it not.

Mir. Which may be preſum'd with a bleſſing on our endeavours———

Mil. Odious endeavours!

Mir. I denounce againſt all ſtrait lacing, ſqueezing for a ſhape, 'till you mould my boy's head like a ſugar-loaf, and inſtead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked billet. Laſtly, to the dominion of the tea-table I ſubmit. —But with proviſo, that you exceed not in your province; but reſtrain yourſelf to native and ſimple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee. As likewiſe to genuine and authoriz'd tea-table talk——ſuch as mending of faſhions, ſpoiling reputations, railing at abſent friends, and ſo forth ——but that on no account you encroach upon the mens prerogative, and preſume to drink healths, or toaſt fellows; for prevention of which I baniſh all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all anniſeed, cinnamon, citron and Barbadoes-waters, together with Ratafia, and the moſt noble ſpirit of clary——— but for couſlip wine, poppy water, and all dormitives, thoſe I allow.——Theſe proviſo's admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying huſband.

Mil. O horrid proviſo's! filthy ſtrong-waters! I toaſt fellows! odious men! I hate your odious proviſo's.

Mir. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiſs your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witneſs to the ſealing of the deed.

SCENE VI.

[*To them*] Mrs FAINALL.

Mil. Fainall, what ſhall I do? ſhall I have him? I think I muſt have him.

Mrs *Fain.* Ay, ay, take him, take him, what ſhou'd you do?

Mil. Well then———I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright———Fainall, I ſhall never ſay it———well ———I think———I'll endure you.

Mrs *Fain.* Fy, fy, have him, have him, and tell him ſo in plain terms: for I am ſure you have a mind to him.

Mil. Are you? I think I have——and the horrid man looks as if he thought ſo too———well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you———I won't be kiſs'd, nor I won't be thank'd———here kiſs my hand tho'———ſo, hold your tongue now, don't ſay a word.

Mrs *Fain.* Mirabell, there's a neceſſity for your obedience;——you have neither time to talk nor ſtay. My mother is coming; and in my conſcience if ſhe ſhou'd ſee you, wou'd fall into fits, and may be not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to ſucceed. Therefore ſpare your extaſies for another occaſion, and ſlip down the back-ſtairs, where Foible waits to conſult you.

Mil. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I ſuppoſe you have ſaid ſomething to pleaſe me.

Mir. I am all obedience.

SCENE VII.

MILLAMANT, Mrs FAINALL.

Mrs *Fain.* Yonder Sir Wilfull's drunk, and ſo noiſy that my mother has been forc'd to leave Sir Rowland to appeaſe him; but he anſwers her only with ſinging and drinking———what they may have done by this time I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mil. Well, if Mirabell ſhou'd not make a good huſband, I am a loſt thing———for I find I love him violently.

Mrs *Fain.* So it ſeems; for you mind not what's ſaid

to you——If you doubt him, you had beſt take up with Sir Wilfull.

Mil. How can you name that ſuperannuated lubber? Foh!

SCENE VIII.

[*To them*] WITWOUD *from drinking.*

Mrs *Fain.* So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I cou'd ſtay no longer——I have laugh'd like ten Chriſtnings——I am tipſy with laughing——if I had ſtaid any longer I ſhou'd have burſt,——I muſt have been let out and piec'd in the ſides like an unfiz'd camlet——Yes, yes, the fray is compos'd; my Lady came in like a *noli proſequi*, and ſtopp'd the proceedings.

Mil. What was the diſpute?

Wit. That's the jeſt; there was no diſpute. They cou'd neither of 'em ſpeak for rage, and ſo fell a ſputt'ring at one another like two roaſted apples.

SCENE IX.

[*To them*] PETULANT, *drunk.*

Wit. Now, Petulant, all's over, all's well. Gad my head begins to whim it about——why doſt thou not ſpeak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fiſh.

Pet. Look you, Mrs Millamant——if you can love me, dear nymph—ſay it—and that's the concluſion——paſs on, or paſs off——that's all.

Wit. Thou haſt utter'd volumes, folios, in leſs than *decimo ſexto*, my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwoud——you art an annihilator of ſenſe.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phraſes; and doſt deal in

remnants of remnants, like a maker of pincushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of shorthand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest.—A gemini of asses split wou'd make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. tand off———I'll kiss no more males——I have kiss'd your twin yonder in a humour of reconciliation, 'till he [*hiccup*] rises upon my stomach like a radish.

Mil. Eh! filthy creature————what was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel——there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have express'd provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Mil. Me!

Pet. If I have a humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude the premises.—If you are not handsome, what then, if I have a humour to prove it? if I shall have my reward, say so; if not, fight for your face the next time yourself—I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do, wrap thyself up like a wood-louse, and dream revenge—and hear me, if thou canst learn to write by tomorrow morning, pen me a challenge———I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider———go flea dogs, and read romances————I'll go to bed to my maid.

Mrs *Fain.* He's horridly drunk——how came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight——your husband's advice; but he sneak'd off.

SCENE X.

Sir WILFULL *drunk*, Lady WISHFORT, WITWOUD, MILLAMANT, Mrs FAINALL.

Lady. Out upon't, out upon't, at years of diſcretion and comport yourſelf at this rantipole rate!

Sir *Wilf.* No offence, aunt.

Lady. Offence! as I'm a perſon, I'm aſham'd of you ——fogh! how you ſtink of wine! d'ye think my niece will ever endure ſuch a Borachio! you're an abſolute Borachio.

Sir *Wilf.* Borachio?

Lady. At a time when you ſhou'd commence an amour, and put your beſt foot foremoſt——

Sir *Wilf.* 'Sheart, an you grutch me your liquor, make a bill—give me more drink, and take my purſe.

[Sings.] *Pr'ythee fill me the glaſs*
'Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
He that whines for a laſs
Is an ignorant aſs,
For a bumper has not it's fellow.

But if you wou'd have me marry my couſin——ſay the word, and I'll do't——Wilfull will do't, that's the word ——Wilfull will do't, that's my creſt——my motto I have forgot.

Lady. My nephew's a little overtaken, couſin——but 'tis with drinking your health——O' my word you are oblig'd to him.

Sir *Wilf* *In vino veritas*, aunt:——If I drunk your health to-day, couſin——I am a Borachio. But if you have a mind to be marry'd, ſay the word, and ſend for the piper; Wilfull will do't. If not, duſt it away, and let's have t'other round——Tony, odds heart, where's

Tony?——Tony's an honeſt fellow; but he ſpits after a bumper, and that's a fault.

[Sings.] *We'll drink, and we'll never have done, boys,*
Put the glaſs then round with the ſun, boys.
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk ev'ry night,
And that makes him ſo bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.

The ſun's a good pimple, an honeſt ſoaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes——Your Antipodes are a good raſcally ſort of topſy-turvy fellows——If I had a bumper, I'd ſtand upon my head and drink a health to 'em.—A match, or no match, couſin, with the hard name——aunt, Wilfull will do't. If ſhe has her maidenhead, let her look to't; if ſhe has not, let her keep her own counſel in the mean time, and cry out at the nine month's end.

Mil. Your pardon, Madam, I can ſtay no longer——Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Egh! how he ſmells! I ſhall be overcome, if I ſtay. Come, couſin.

SCENE XI.

Lady WISHFORT, Sir WILFULL WITWOUD, Mr WITWOUD, FOIBLE.

Lady. Smells! he would poiſon a tallow-chandler and his family. Beaſtly creature, I know not what to do with him——travel, quoth-a; ay, travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks—for thou art not fit to live in a Chriſtian commonwealth, thou beaſtly Pagan.

Sir *Wilf.* Turks, no; no Turks, aunt: your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape. Your Mahometan, your Muſſulman, is a dry ſtinkard——no offence, aunt. My map ſays, that your Turk is not ſo honeſt a

man as your Chriſtian——I cannot find by the map that your Mufti is orthodox—whereby it is a plain caſe, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and [*hiccup*] Greek for claret.

[Sings.] *To drink is a Chriſtian diverſion,*
Unknown to the Turk or the Perſian:
Let Mahometan fools
Live by Heatheniſh rules,
And be damn'd over tea-cups and coffee.
But let Britiſh lads ſing,
Crown a health to the King,
And a fig for the Sultan and Sophy.

Ah, Tony! [Foible *whiſpers Lady* Wiſhfort.

Lady. Sir Rowland impatient? Good lack! what ſhall I do with this beaſtly tumbril?—Go ly down and ſleep, you ſot——or as I'm a perſon, I'll have you baſtinado'd with broom-ſticks. Call up the wenches with broom-ſticks.

Sir *Wilf.* Ahey! wenches, where are the wenches?

Lady. Dear couſin Witwoud, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with ſome precipitation——you will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, knight—pox on him, I don't know what to ſay to him——will you go to a cock-match?

Sir *Wilf.* With a wench, Tony! Is ſhe a ſhake-bag, ſirrah? Let me bite your cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! he has a breath like a bag-pipe—ay, ay, come, will you march, my Salopian?

Sir *Wilf.* Lead on, little Tony——I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tantony. Sirrah, thou ſhalt be my Tantony, and I'll be thy pig.

——*And a fig for the Sultan and Sophy.*

Lady. This will never do. It will never make a match——at leaſt before he has been abroad.

SCENE XII.

Lady WISHFORT, WAITWELL *disguised as for Sir* Rowland.

Lady. Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness——I have more pardons to ask than the Pope distributes in the year of Jubilee. But I hope where there is likely to be so near an alliance,—we may unbend the severity of decorums—and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, Madam, is the effect of my transport;——and 'till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalized on the rack; and do but hang, Madam, on the tenter of expectation.

Lady. You have excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland, and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence.——But a day or two for decency of marriage—

Wait. For decency of funeral, Madam. The delay will break my heart ——or, if that should fail, I shall be poison'd. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me,——and I would willingly starve him before I die—I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction——That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper.

Lady. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your life, and the accomplishment of your revenge——Not that I respect myself, tho' he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

Lady. O Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and tremblings, the ardours and the ecstasies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the hand-grip-

ings, the pangs and the pathetic regards of his proteſting eyes! Oh no memory can regiſter.

Wait. What, my rival! is the rebel my rival? a'dies.

Lady. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland, ſtarve him gradually, inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he ſhall be barefoot; in a month out at knees with begging alms———he ſhall ſtarve upward and upward, 'till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a ſtink like a candle's end upon a ſave-all.

Lady. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way——you are no novice in the labyrinth of love—you have the clue—but as I am a perſon, Sir Rowland, you muſt not attribute my yielding to any ſiniſter appetite, or indigeſtion of widowhood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence—I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials——

Wait. Far be it from me—

Lady. If you do, I proteſt I muſt recede—or think that I have made a proſtitution of decorums; but in the vehemence of compaſſion, and to ſave the life of a perſon of ſo much importance—

Wait. I eſteem it ſo——

Lady. Or elſe you wrong my condeſcenſion—

Wait. I do not, I do not——

Lady. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair ſhrine of virtue.

Lady. If you think the leaſt ſcruple of carnality was an ingredient——

Wait. Dear Madam, no. You are all camphire and frankincenſe, all chaſtity and odour.

Lady. Or that———

SCENE XIII.

[*To them*] FOIBLE.

Foib. Madam, the dancers are ready, and there's one with a letter, who muſt deliver it into your own hands.

Lady. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave! Think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a perſon who would ſuffer racks in honour's cauſe, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you inceſſantly.

SCENE XIV.

WAITWELL, FOIBLE.

Wait. Fy, fy,———What a ſlavery have I undergone? Spouſe, haſt thou any cordial? I want ſpirits.

Foib. What a waſhy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and ſwearing to a fine lady?

Wait. O, ſhe is the antidote to deſire. Spouſe, thou wilt fare the worſe for't—I ſhall have no appetite to iteration of nuptials—this eight-and-forty hours.—By this hand I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days———than act Sir Rowland 'till this time to-morrow.

SCENE V.

[*To them*] LADY, *with a letter.*

Lady. Call in the dancers;———Sir Rowland, we'll ſit, if you pleaſe, and ſee the entertainment. [*Dance.*

Now, with your permiſſion, Sir Rowland, I will peruſe my letter———I would open it in your preſence, becauſe I would not make you uneaſy. If it ſhould make you uneaſy, I would burn it—ſpeak if it does—but you may ſee the ſuperſcription is like a woman's hand.

Foib. By Heav'n! Mrs Marwood's, I know it,——my heart akes——get it from her—— [*To him.*

Wait. A woman's hand? No, Madam, that's no woman's hand, I see already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

Lady. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return, by a frank communication——you shall see it ——we'll open it together——look you here.

Reads—" Madam, tho' unknown to you," [Look you there, 'tis from no body that I know.]——" I have that " honour for your character, that I think myself oblig'd to " let you know you are abus'd. He who pretends to be " Sir Rowland, is a cheat and a rascal"——

Oh Heav'ns! what's this?

Foib. Unfortunate! all's ruin'd.

Wait. How, how; let me see, let me see,——[*Reading,*] " A rascal, and disguis'd and suborn'd for that imposture," ——O villainy! O villainy!—" by the contrivance of"—

Lady. I shall faint, I shall die, oh!

Foib. Say 'tis your nephew's hand——quickly, his plot, swear it, swear it.—— [*To him.*

Wait. Here's a villain! Madam, don't you perceive it, don't you see it?

Lady. Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand.——A woman's hand? The rascal writes a sort of a large hand; your Roman hand——I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him——

Foib. O treachery! But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

Wait. Sure! am I here? do I live? do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him in the same character.

Lady. How!

Foib. O what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture! this was the business that brought

Mr Mirabell disguis'd to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me and would have hid his face.

Lady. How, how!———I heard the villain was in the house indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addresses.

Foib. Then, then, Madam, Mr Mirabell waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your Ladyship to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough, his date is short.

Foib. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause——My Lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, tho' it cost me my life.

Lady. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight, if you should be kill'd I must never shew my face; or hang'd—O consider my reputation, Sir Rowland,——No, you shan't fight,———I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love not to fight.

Wait. I am charm'd, Madam, I obey. But some proof you must let me give you; I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

Lady. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort, bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract to be sign'd this night? May I hope so far?

Lady. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. O this is a happy discovery!

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come——and married we will be in spite of treachery; ay, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandon'd nephew. Come, my buxom widow:

Ere long you shall substantial proof receive,
That I'm an errant knight——

Foib. Or errant knave.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE *continues.*

Lady WISHFORT, *and* FOIBLE.

LADY.

OUT of my houſe, out of my houſe, thou viper, thou ſerpent, that I have feſter'd; thou boſom traitreſs, that I rais'd from nothing———Begone, begone, begone, go, go———That I took from waſhing of old gauſe and weaving dead hair, with a bleak blue noſe over a chaffing-diſh of ſtarv'd embers, and dining behind a traverſe rag, in a ſhop no bigger than a bird-cage,———go, go, ſtarve again, do, do.

Foib. Dear Madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

Lady. Away, out, out, go, ſet up for yourſelf again——do, drive a trade, do, with your three penny-worth of ſmall ware, flaunting upon a packthread, under a brandy-ſeller's bulk, or againſt a dead wall by a ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old Friſoneer gorget, with a yard of yellow Colberteen again; do; an old gnaw'd maſk, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glaſs necklace with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cape with one ear. Go, go, drive a trade——Theſe were your commodities, you treacherous trull, this was the merchandiſe you dealt in, when I took you into my houſe, plac'd you next myſelf, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feather'd your neſt?

Foib. No, no, dear Madam. Do but hear me, have but a moment's patience———I'll confeſs all. Mr Mirabell ſeduc'd me; I am not the firſt that he has wheedled with his diſſembling tongue; your Ladyſhip's own wiſdom has been deluded by him; then how ſhould I, a poor ignorant, defend myſelf? O Madam, if you knew but what he promis'd me, and how he aſſur'd me your Ladyſhip

ſhould come to no damage————Or elſe the wealth of the Indies ſhould not have brib'd me to conſpire againſt ſo good, ſo ſweet, ſo kind a Lady as you have been to me.

Lady. No damage? What, to betray me, to marry me to a caſt-ſervingman; to make me a receptacle, an hoſpital for a decay'd pimp? No damage? O thou frontleſs impudence, more than a big-belly'd actreſs.

Foib. Pray, do but hear me, Madam, he could not marry your Ladyſhip, Madam——No indeed his marriage was to have been void in law, for he was married to me firſt, to ſecure your Ladyſhip. He could not have bedded your Ladyſhip; for if he had conſummated with your Ladyſhip he muſt have run the riſque of the law, and been put upon the clergy———Yes indeed, I inquir'd of the law in that caſe before I would meddle or make.

Lady. What then, I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it ſeems,———while you were catering for Mirabell, I have been broker for you? What, have you made a paſſive bawd of me?——this exceeds all precedent; I am brought to fine uſes, to become a botcher of ſecond-hand marriages between Abigails and Andrews! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baſte you together, you and your Philander. I'll Duke's-place you, as I'm a perſon. Your turtle is in cuſtody already: you ſhall coo in the ſame cage, if there be a conſtable or warrant in the pariſh.

Foib. O that I ever was born, O that I was ever marry'd,————a birde, ay I ſhall be a Bridewell-birde. Oh!

SCENE II.

Mrs FINALL, FOIBLE.

Mrs *Fain.* Poor Foible, what's the matter?

Foib. O Madam, my Lady's gone for a conſtable; I ſhall be had to juſtice, and put to Bridewell to beat hemp; poor Waitwell's gone to priſon already.

Mrs *Fain.* Have a good heart, Foible, Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foib. Yes, yes: I know it, Madam; she was in my Lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my Lady; and that missing effect, Mr Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers; and in the mean time Mrs Marwood declar'd all to my Lady.

Mrs *Fain.* Was there no mention made of me in the letter———My mother does not suspect me being in the confederacy: I fancy Marwood has not told her, tho' she has told my husband.

Foib. Yes, Madam: but my Lady did not see that part: we stifled the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mrs Fainall of your Ladyship then?

Mrs *Fain.* Ay, all's out, my affair with Mirabell, every thing discover'd. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foib. Indeed, Madam, and so 'tis a comfort if you knew all———he has been even with your Ladyship; which I cou'd have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will: I had rather bring friends together, than set them at distance. But Mrs Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs *Fain.* Say'st thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

Foib. I can take my oath of it, Madam, so can Mrs Mincing; we have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when you were at Hide-park;———and we were thought to have gone a walking; but we went up unawares,———tho' we were sworn to secrecy too; Madam Marwood took a book and swore us upon it; but it was but a book of poems.———So long as it was not a bible oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I cou'd wish. Now, Mincing?

SCENE III.

[*To them*] MINCING.

Min. My Lady would speak to Mrs Foible, Mem Mr Mirabell is with her; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my Lady's closet, 'till my old Lady's anger is abated. O, my old Lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr Fainall has said; he swears, and my old Lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, Mem, how that he'll have my Lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs *Fain.* Does your Lady or Mirabell know that?

Min. Yes, Mem, they have sent me to see if Sir Wilfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My Lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pound. O come, Mrs Foible, I hear my old Lady.

Mrs *Fain.* Foible, you must tell Mincing, that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foib. Yes, yes, Madam.

Min. O yes, Mem, I will vouch any thing for your Ladyship's service, be what it will.

SCENE IV.

Mrs FAINALL, Lady WISHFORT, MARWOOD.

Lady. O my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland. And now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-

law, to save the honour of my house, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to desarts and solitudes; and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves and be shepherdesses.

Mrs *Mar.* Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, Madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

Lady. O daughter, daughter, is it possible thou should'st be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the most minute particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mold of virtue? I have not only been a mold but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.

Mrs *Fain.* I don't understand your Ladyship.

Lady. Not understand? Why, have you not been naught? have you not been sophisticated? Not understand? here I'm ruin'd to compound for your caprices and your cuckoldoms. I must pawn my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough——

Mrs *Fain.* I am wrong'd and abus'd, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs *Mar.* My friend, Mrs Fainall? your husband my friend, what do you mean?

Mrs *Fain.* I know what I mean, Madam, and so do you; and so shall all the world at a time convenient.

Mrs *Mar.* I am sorry to see you so passionate, Madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your Ladyship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, Madam, if I meddle no

more with an affair in which I am not personally concerned.

Lady. O dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns;——you ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature; she deserves more from you than all your life can accomplish———O don't leave me destitute in this perplexity——no, stick to me, my good genius.

Mrs *Fain.* I tell you, Madam, you're abus'd——stick to you? ay, like a leach, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you shan't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defy 'em all. Let 'em prove their aspersions; I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial.

SCENE V.

Lady WISHFORT, MARWOOD.

Lady. Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wrong'd after all, ha?——I don't know what to think,—and I promise you her education has been very unexceptionable—I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very fancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men——ay, friend, she wou'd ha' shriek'd if she had but seen a man, 'till she was in her teens. As I am a person 'tis true——she was never suffer'd to play with a male child, though but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender——O, she never look'd a man in the face but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments, and his sleek face, 'till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs *Mar.* 'Twas much she should be deceived so long.

Lady. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to have been catechiz'd by him; and have heard his long

lectures againſt ſinging and dancing, and ſuch debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane muſic-meetings, where the lewd trebles ſqueak nothing but bawdy, and the baſes roar blaſphemy. O, ſhe wou'd have ſwoon'd at the ſight or name of an obſcene play-book——and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore? and thought it excommunication to ſet her foot within the door of a play-houſe? O dear friend, I can't believe it, no, no; as ſhe ſays, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs *Mar.* Prove it, Madam? What, and have your name proſtituted in a public court; yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of brawling lawyers? To be uſher'd in with an Oyes of ſcandal; and have your caſe opened by an old fumbling lecher in a quoif like a man-midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punſters, and quibblers by the ſtatute; and become a jeſt againſt a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jeſt in any record; not even in doomſday-book: to diſcompoſe the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, ſimpers under a grey beard, and fidges off and on his cuſhion as if he had ſwallowed cantharides, or ſat upon *cow-itch*.

Lady. O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs *Mar.* And then to have my young revellers of the Temple take notes, like prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it over again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-houſe.

Lady. Worſe and worſe.

Mrs *Mar.* Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it muſt, after this, be conſign'd by the ſhort-hand-writers to the public preſs; and from thence be transferred to the hands, nay, into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's: and this you muſt hear 'till you are ſtunn'd; nay, you muſt hear nothing elſe for ſome days.

Lady. O, 'tis insupportable. No, no, dear friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all———any thing, every thing for composition.

Mrs *Mar.* Nay, Madam, I advise nothing, I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniences which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr Fainall; if he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

SCENE VI.

FAINALL, Lady WISHFORT, Mrs MARWOOD.

Lady. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood: no, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, Madam; I have suffer'd myself to be overcome by the importunity of this Lady your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life, on condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I think convenient.

Lady. Never to marry?

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands,—the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs *Mar.* That condition, I dare answer, my Lady will consent to, without difficulty; she has already but too much experienc'd the perfidiousness of men. Besides, Madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

Lady. Ay, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency———

Fain. O, if you are prescrib'd marriage, you shall be consider'd; I will only reserve to myself the power to chuse for you. If your physic be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of my fortune, not made over al-

ready; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

Lady. This is most inhumanly savage; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

Fain. I learn'd it from his Czarish Majesty's retinue, in a winter's evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practis'd in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endow'd, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pound, which is the moiety of Mrs Millamant's fortune in your possession; and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceas'd husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her obedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge; and by refusing the offer'd match with Sir Wilfull Witwoud, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

Lady. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands——I'll hear no objections.

Lady. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand 'till more sufficient deeds can be perfected: which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while I'll go for the said instrument, and 'till my return you may balance this matter in your own discretion.

SCENE VII.

Lady WISHFORT, Mrs MARWOOD.

Lady. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel; must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs *Mar.* 'Tis severe indeed, Madam, that you shou'd smart for your daughter's wantonness.

Lady. 'I was against my consent that she marry'd this

Barbarian, but she wou'd have him, tho' her year was not out.——Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, wou'd not have carry'd it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers; she is match'd now with a witness——I shall be mad, dear friend, is there no comfort for me? must I live to be confiscated at this rebel-rate?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

SCENE VIII.

[*To them*] MILLAMANT, Sir WILFULL.

Sir *Wilf.* Aunt, your servant.

Lady. Out caterpillar, call not me aunt; I know thee not.

Sir *Wilf.* I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say,——'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What wou'd you have? I hope I committed no offence, aunt——and if I did I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke any thing I'll pay for't, an it cost a pound. And so let that content for what's past, and make no more words. For what's to come, to pleasure you I'm willing to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends, she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

Lady. How's this, dear niece? have I any comfort? can this be true?

Mil. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, Madam; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinform'd, I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knight-hood: and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have oblig'd him to make a resignation of it in your Ladyship's presence;—he is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

Lady. Well, I swear I am something reviv'd at this testimony of your obedience; but I cannot admit that

traitor.———I fear I cannot fortify myſelf to ſupport his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a gorgon; if I ſee him I fear I ſhall turn to ſtone, petrify inceſſantly.

Mil. If you diſoblige him, he may reſent your refuſal, and inſiſt upon the contract ſtill. Then 'tis the laſt time he will be offenſive to you.

Lady. Are you ſure it will be the laſt time?——If I were ſure of that——ſhall I never ſee him again?

Mil. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir *Wilf.* 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt, let him come in; why, we are ſworn brothers and fellow-travellers.——We are to be Pylades and Oreſtes, he and I —He is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been over-ſeas once already; and with proviſo that I marry my couſin, will croſs 'em once again, only to bear me company. ——'Sheart, I'll call him in,———an I ſet on't once, he ſhall come in; and ſee who'll hinder him.

[*Goes to the door and hems.*

Mrs *Mar.* This is precious fooling, if it wou'd paſs; but I'll know the bottom of it.

Lady. O dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs *Mar.* Not far, Madam; I'll return immediately.

SCENE IX.

Lady WISHFORT, MILLAMANT, Sir WILFULL, MIRABELL.

Sir *Wilf.* Look up, man, I'll ſtand by you; 'ſbud an ſhe do frown, ſhe can't kill you;——beſides——harkee, ſhe dare not frown deſperately, becauſe her face is none of her own; 'Sheart, and ſhe ſhou'd, her forehead wou'd wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheeſe; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mir. If a deep ſenſe of the many injuries I have offer'd to ſo good a lady, with a ſincere remorſe, and a

hearty contrition, can but obtain the leaſt glance of compaſſion, I am happy.——Ah, Madam, there was a time——But let it be forgotten——I confeſs I have deſervedly forfeited the high place I once held of ſighing at your feet. Nay, kill me not, by turning from me in diſdain.—I come not to plead for favour;—nay, not for pardon; I am a ſuppliant only for pity—I am going where I never ſhall behold you more——

Sir *Wilf.* How, fellow-traveller! you ſhall go by yourſelf then.

Mir. Let me be pitied firſt, and afterwards forgotten.—I aſk no more.

Sir *Wilf.* By'r lady, a very reaſonable requeſt, and will coſt you nothing, aunt—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt; why you muſt an you are a Chriſtian.

Mir. Conſider, Madam, in reality, you could not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent deviee; though I confeſs it had a face of guiltineſs,——it was at moſt an artifice which love contriv'd——And errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial. At leaſt think it is puniſhment enough, that I have loſt what in my heart I hold moſt dear, that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir *Wilf.* An he does not move me, would I may never be o' the quorum;——an it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again,——I would I might never take ſhipping——Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I ſhall melt, I can tell you that. My contract went no farther than a little mouth-glue, and that's hardly dry;——one doleful ſigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis diſſolved.

Lady. Well, nephew, upon your account——Ah, he has a falſe inſinuating tongue—well, Sir, I will ſtifle my juſt reſentment at my nephew's requeſt.——I will endeavour what I can to forget,—but on proviſo that you reſign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mir. It is in writing, and with papers of concern;

but I have ſent my ſervant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all the acknowledgments for your tranſcendant goodneſs.

Lady. Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue; ——When I did not ſee him, I could have bribed a villain to his aſſaſſination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have ſo long lain ſmother'd in my breaſt— [*Aſide.*

SCENE X.

[*To them*] FAINALL, Mrs MARWOOD.

Fain. Your date of deliberation, Madam, is expir'd. Here is the inſtrument; are you prepar'd to ſign?

Lady. If I were prepar'd, I am not impower'd. My niece exerts a lawful claim, having match'd herſelf by my direction to Sir Wilfull.

Fain. That ſham is too groſs to paſs on me——tho' 'tis impos'd on you, Madam.

Mil. Sir, I have given my conſent.

Mir. And, Sir, I have reſign'd my pretenſions.

Sir *Wilf.* And, Sir, I aſſert my right; and will maintain it in defiance of you, Sir, and of your inſtrument. 'ſheart, an you talk of an inſtrument, Sir, I have an old fox by my thigh ſhall hack your inſtrument of Ram vellum to ſhreds, Sir. It ſhall not be ſufficient for a mittimus or a tailor's meaſure; therefore withdraw your inſtrument, Sir, or, by'r lady, I ſhall draw mine.

Lady. Hold, nephew, hold.

Mil. Good Sir Wilfull, reſpite your valour.

Fain. Indeed! Are you provided of your guard, with your ſingle beef-eater there? but I'm prepar'd for you, and inſiſt upon my firſt propoſal. You ſhall ſubmit your own eſtate to my management, and abſolutely make over my wife's to my ſole uſe, as purſuant to the purport and tenor of this other covenant——I ſuppoſe, Madam, your conſent is not requiſite in this caſe; nor, Mr Mirabell,

your reſignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right.——You may draw your fox if you pleaſe, Sir, and make a bear-garden flouriſh ſomewhere elſe: for here it will not avail. This, my Lady Wiſhfort, muſt be ſubſcribed, or your darling daughter's turn'd adrift, like a leaky hulk, to ſink or ſwim, as ſhe and the current of this lewd town can agree.

Lady. Is there no means, no remedy to ſtop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! doſt thou not owe thy being, thy ſubſiſtence, to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll anſwer you when I have the reſt of it in my poſſeſſion.

Mir. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deſerved you ſhould owe any obligation to me; or elſe perhaps I cou'd adviſe——

Lady. O what? what? to ſave me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's paſt; nay, I'll conſent to any thing to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

Mir. Ay, Madam; but that is too late, my reward is intercepted. You have diſpoſed of her, who only could have made a compenſation for all my ſervices——but be it as it may, I am reſolv'd I'll ſerve you; you ſhall not be wrong'd in this ſavage manner.

Lady. How! dear Mr Mirabell, can you be ſo generous at laſt! But it is not poſſible. Harkee, I'll break my nephew's match; you ſhall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but ſave me from this imminent danger.

Mir. Will you? I take you at your word. I aſk no more. I muſt have leave for two criminals to appear.

Lady. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mir. Foible is one, and a penitent.

SCENE XI.

[*To them*] Mrs FAINALL, FOIBLE, MINCING.

Mrs *Mar.* O my ſhame! [Mirabell *and* Lady *go to Mrs* Fainwell *and* Foible.] Theſe corrupt things are brought hither to expoſe me. [*To* Fain.

Fain. If it muſt all come out, why let 'em know it; 'tis but the Way of the World. That ſhall not urge me to relinquiſh or abate one tittle of my terms; no, I will inſiſt the more.

Foib. Yes indeed, Madam, I'll take my bible oath of it.

Min. And ſo will I, Mem.

Lady. O Marwood, Marwood, art thou falſe? my friend deceive me! haſt thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mrs *Mar.* Have you ſo much ingratitude and injuſtice to give credit againſt your friend, to the aſperſions of two ſuch mercenary trulls?

Min. Mercenary, Mem? I ſcorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr Fainall in the blue garret; by the ſame token, you ſwore us to ſecrecy upon Meſſalina's poems. Mercenary? No, if we wou'd have been mercenary, we ſhou'd have held our tongues; you wou'd have brib'd us ſufficiently.

Fain. Go, you are an inſignificant thing.——Well, what are you the better for this? is this Mr Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer——You thing, that was a wife, ſhall ſmart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy ſhame; your body ſhall be naked as your reputation.

Mrs *Fain.* I deſpiſe you, and defy your malice——you have aſpers'd me wrongfully——I have prov'd your falſehood——go you and your treacherous——I will not name it, but ſtarve together——periſh.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear. Madam, I'll be fool'd no longer.

Lady. Ah, Mr Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

Mir. O in good time—your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, Madam.

SCENE XII.

[*To them*] WAITWELL, *with a box of writings.*

Lady. O Sir Rowland——well, rascal.

Wait. What your Ladyship pleases. I have brought the black box at last, Madam.

Mir. Give it me; Madam, you remember your promise.

Lady. Ay, dear Sir.

Mir. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, Sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

Fain. 'Sdeath, what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

SCENE XIII.

[*To them*] PETULANT, WITWOUD.

Pet. How now? What's the matter? Whose hand's out?

Wit. Hey-day! what, are you all got together, like players at the end of the last act?

Mir. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay, I do, my hand I remember——Petulant set his mark.

Mir. You wrong him, his name is fairly written, as shall appear——You do not remember, gentlemen, any thing of what that parchment contain'd——

[*Undoing the box.*

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I, I write, I read nothing.

Mir. Very well, now you shall know—Madam, your promise.

Lady. Ay, ay, Sir, upon my honour.

Mir. Mr Fainall, it is now time that you shou'd know, that your Lady, while she was at her own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune—

Fain. Sir! pretended?

Mir. Yes, Sir. I say that this lady while a widow, having it seems received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she cou'd never have suspected—she did, I say, by the wholsome advice of friends and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please—[*Holding out the parchment.*] though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

Fain. Very likely, Sir. What's here? Damnation!

[*Reads.*] "A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of
"Arabella Anguish, widow, in trust to Edward
"Mirabell."

Confusion!

Mir. Even so, Sir, 'tis the Way of the World, Sir; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtain'd from your Lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be reveng'd.

[*Offers to run at Mrs* Fain.

Sir *Wilf.* Hold, Sir, now you may make your bear-garden flourish somewhere else, Sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, Sir, be sure you shall——Let me pass, oaf.

Mrs *Fain.* Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment: you had better give it vent.

Mrs *Mar.* Yes, it must have vent—and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt.

SCENE *the Last.*

Lady WISHFORT, MILLAMANT, MIRABELL, Mrs FAINALL, Sir WILFULL, PETULANT, WITWOUD, FOIBLE, MINCING, WAITWELL.

Lady. O daughter, daughter, 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs *Fain.* Thank Mr Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

Lady. Well, Mr Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine—First, I pardon, for your sake, Sir Rowland there, and Foible—the next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that——

Mir. For that, Madam, give yourself no trouble—let me have your consent—Sir Wilfull is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action, for our service; and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir *Wilf.* 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry. My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't I must do't. And if these two gentlemen would travel too, I think they may be spar'd.

Pet. For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or on.

Wit. I'gad I understand nothing of the matter—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

Lady. Well, Sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Mil. Why does not the man take me? wou'd you have me give myself to you over again?

Mir. Ay, and over and over again; [*Kisses her hand.*] I wou'd have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

Sir *Wilf.* 'Sheart, you'll have time enough to toy after you're married; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the mean time, that we who are not lovers may have some other employment besides looking on.

Mir. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull. What shall we do for music?

Foib. O Sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call. [*A Dance.*

Lady. As I am a person I can hold out no longer;——I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

Mir. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lyes to a reunion; in the mean time, Madam, [*To Mrs* Fain.] let me before these witnesses restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well-manag'd, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warn'd, who mean to wed;
Lest mutual falsehood stain the bridal bed;
For each deceiver to his cost may find,
That marriage-frauds too oft are paid in kind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

AFTER our Epilogue this croud dismisses,
I'm thinking how this play'll be pull'd to pieces.
But pray consider, e'er you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 'twou'd be to please you all.
There are some critics so with spleen diseas'd,
They scarcely come inclining to be pleas'd:
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
That pleases any one against his will.
Then all bad poets we are sure are foes,
And how their number swells, the town well knows:
In shoals I've mark'd 'em judging in the pit;
Though they're, on no pretence, for judgment fit,
But that they have been damn'd for want of wit.
Since when, they by their own offences taught,
Set up for spies on plays, and finding fault.
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent;
Such who watch plays with scurrilous intent
To mark out who by characters are meant.
And though no perfect likeness they can trace,
Yet each pretends to know the copy'd face.
These with false glosses, feed their own ill nature,
And turn to libel what was meant a satire.
May such malicious fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the fools design'd:
If any are so arrogantly vain,
To think they singly can support a scene,
And furnish fool enough to entertain.
For well the learn'd and the judicious know
That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low,
As any one abstracted fop to show.
For, as when painters form a matchless face,
They from each fair one catch some different grace;
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single beauty must pretend;
So poets oft do in one piece expose
Whole belles-assemblees of coquets and beaux.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS: A MASQUE.

———" Vincit utramque Venus."
Ov. Art. Am. l. 1.

LUDOVICUS

PARISIS

NASCITUR

THE

JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

The SCENE is a landſcape of a beautiful paſture ſuppoſed on mount Ida. The ſhepherd Paris is ſeen ſeated under a tree, and playing on his pipe; his crook and ſcrip, *&c.* lying by him. While a ſymphony is playing, Mercury deſcends with his caduceus in one hand, and an apple of gold in the other; after the ſymphony he ſings.

MERCURY.

FROM high Olympus, and the realms above,
Behold I come the meſſenger of Jove;
His dread commands I bear:
Shepherd, ariſe and hear;
Ariſe, and leave a while thy rural care;
Forbear thy woolly flock to feed,
And lay aſide thy tuneful reed;
For thou to greater honours art decreed.
Par. O Hermes, I thy godhead know,
By thy winged heels and head,
By thy rod that wakes the dead,
And guides the ſhades below.
Say wherefore doſt thou ſeek this humble plain,
To greet a lowly ſwain?
What does the mighty thunderer ordain?
Mer. This radiant fruit behold,
More bright than burniſh'd gold;

Three Goddeſſes for this contend;
See now they deſcend,
And this way they bend.
Shepherd, take the golden prize,
Yield it to the brighteſt eyes.

[Juno, Pallas, *and* Venus *are ſeen at a diſtance deſcending in ſeveral machines.*

Par. O raviſhing delight!
What mortal can ſupport the ſight?
Alas! too weak is human brain,
So much rapture to ſuſtain.
I faint, I fall! O take me hence,
Ere ecſtacy invades my aking ſenſe.
Help me, Hermes, or I die,
Save me from exceſs of joy.

Mer. Fear not, mortal, none ſhall harm thee;
With my ſacred rod I'll charm thee.
Freely view and gaze all over,
Thou may'ſt ev'ry grace diſcover.
Though a thouſand darts fly round thee,
Fear not, mortal, none ſhall wound thee.

In two parts. *Paris.*
Happy thou of human race,
Gods with thee would change their place.
With no God I'd change my place,
Happy I of human race. [Mer. *aſcends.*

[*While a ſymphony is playing,* Juno *deſcends from her machine; after the ſymphony ſhe ſings.*

Juno. Saturnia, wife of thundering Jove am I,
Belov'd by him, and empreſs of the ſky;
Shepherd, fix on me thy wond'ring ſight,
Beware, and view me well, and judge aright.

[*Symphony for* Pallas.

Pal. This way, mortal, bend thy eyes,
Pallas claims the golden prize:
A virgin goddeſs free from ſtain,
And Queen of arts and arms I reign.

[*Symphony for* Venus.

Ven. Hither turn thee, gentle swain,
Let not Venus sue in vain;
Venus rules the Gods above,
Love rules them, and she rules Love.
Hither turn thee, gentle swain.
Pal. Hither turn to me again.
Juno. Turn to me, for I am she.
All three. To me, to me, for I am she.
Ven. Hither turn thee, gentle swain.
Juno and Pal. She will deceive thee.
Ven. They will deceive thee, I'll never leave thee.

Chorus of all three.
Hither turn to me again,
To me, to me, for I am she;
Hither turn thee, gentle swain.

PARIS.

I.

Distracted I turn, but I cannot decide;
So equal a title sure never was try'd.
United, your beauties so dazzle the sight,
That lost in amaze,
I giddily gaze.
Confus'd and o'erwhelm'd with a torrent of light.

II.

Apart let me view then each heav'nly fair,
For three at a time there's no mortal can bear;
And since a gay robe an ill shape may disguise,
When each is undrest,
I'll judge of the best,
For 'tis not a face that must carry the prize.

JUNO *sings alone.*

I.

Let ambition fire thy mind,
Thou wert born o'er men to reign,
Not to follow flocks design'd;
Scorn thy crook, and leave the plain.

II.

Crowns I'll throw beneath thy feet,
Thou on necks of kings shall tread,

Joys in circles joys shall meet,
Which way e're thy fancies lead.

III.

Let not toils of empire fright,
Toils of empire pleasures are;
Thou shalt only know delight,
All the joy, but not the care.

IV.

Shepherd, if thou'lt yield the prize,
For the blessings I bestow,
Joyful I'll ascend the skies,
Happy thou shalt reign below.

CHORUS.

Let Ambition fire thy mind,
Thou wert born o'er men to reign,
Not to follow flocks design'd;
Scorn thy crook, and leave the plain.

PALLAS *sings alone.*

I.

Awake, awake, thy spirits raise,
Waste not thus thy youthful days,
Piping, toying,
Nymphs decoying,
Lost in wanton and inglorious ease.

II.

Hark, hark! the glorious voice of war
Calls aloud, for arms prepare:
Drums are beating,
Rocks repeating,
Martial music charms the joyful air. [*Symphony.*

PALLAS *sings.*

O what joys does conquest yield!
When returning from the field,
O how glorious 'tis to see
The godlike hero crown'd with victory!
Laurel wreaths his head surrounding,
Banners waving in the wind,
Fame her golden trumpet sounding,
Ev'ry voice in chorus join'd.

To me, kind swain, the prize resign,
And fame and conquest shall be thine.

CHORUS.

O how glorious 'tis to see
The godlike hero crown'd with victory! [*Symphony.*

VENUS *sings alone.*

Stay, lovely youth, delay thy choice;
Take heed lest empty names enthral thee;
Attend to Cytherea's voice;
Lo! I who am Love's mother call thee.
Far from thee be anxious care,
And racking thoughts that vex the great:
Empire's but a gilded snare,
And fickle is the warrior's fate:
One only joy mankind can know,
And love alone can that bestow.

CHORUS.

One only joy, &c.

VENUS *sings.*

I.

Nature fram'd thee sure for loving,
Thus adorn'd with ev'ry grace;
Venus' self thy form approving,
Looks with pleasure on thy face.

II.

Happy nymph who shall enfold thee,
Circled in her yielding arms!
Should bright Helen once behold thee,
She'd surrender all her charms.

III.

Fairest she, all nymphs transcending,
That the sun himself has seen,
Were she for the crown contending,
Thou wou'd own her beauty's Queen.

IV.

Gentle shepherd, if my pleading
Can from thee the prize obtain,

Love himself thy conquest aiding,
Thou that matchless fair shalt gain.
Par. I yield, I yield, O take the prize,
And cease, O cease, th' inchanting song;
All Love's darts are in thy eyes,
And harmony falls from thy tongue.
Forbear, O Goddess of desire,
Thus my ravish'd soul to move;
Forbear to fan the raging fire,
And be propitious to my love.

[Here Paris gives to Venus the golden apple. Several Cupids descend, the three Graces alight from the chariot of Venus, they call the Hours, who assemble, with all the attendants on Venus. All join in a circle round her, and sing the last grand chorus, while Juno and Pallas ascend.]

GRAND CHORUS.

Hither all ye Graces, all ye loves,
Hither all ye Hours resort;
Billing sparrows, cooing doves;
Come all the train of Venus' court.
Sing all the great Cytherea's name;
Over empire, over fame,
Her victory proclaim.
Sing, sing and spread the joyful news around,
The Queen of Love, is Queen of Glory crown'd.

SEMELE.

AN

OPERA.

" A natura discedimus; populo nos damus, nullius rei
" bono auctori, et in hac re, sicut in omnibus, incon-
" stantissimo."

Seneca, Ep. 99.

ARGUMENT

Introductory to the

OPERA of SEMELE.

AFTER Jupiter's amour with Europa, the daughter of Agenor King of Phœnicia, he again incenſes Juno by a new affair in the ſame family; viz. *with Semele, niece to Europa, and daughter to Cadmus King of Thebes. Semele is on the point of marriage with Athamas*; *which marriage is about to be ſolemniz'd in the Temple of Juno goddeſs of marriages, when Jupiter by ill omens interrupts the ceremony*; *and afterwards tranſports Semele to a private abode prepared for her. Juno, after many circumſtances, at length aſſumes the ſhape and voice of Ino, ſiſter to Semele*; *by help of which diſguiſe and artful inſinuations, ſhe prevails with her to make a requeſt to Jupiter, which being granted, muſt end in her utter ruin.*

This fable is related in Ovid. Metam. l. iii. *but there Juno is ſaid to impoſe on Semele in the ſhape of an old woman, her nurſe. It is hoped, the liberty taken in ſubſtituting Ino inſtead of the old woman will be excuſed: it was done, becauſe Ino is interwoven in the deſign by her love of Athamas; to whom ſhe was married, according to Ovid*; *and, becauſe*

her character bears a proportion with the dignity of the other persons represented. This reason, it is presumed, may be allowed in a thing entirely fictitious; and more especially being represented under the title of an Opera, where greater absurdities are every day excused.

It was not thought requisite to have any regard either to rhyme or equality of measure, in the lines of the dialogue which was design'd for the recitative style in music. For as that style in music is not confined to the strict observation of time and measure, which is required in the compositions of airs and sonatas, so neither is it necessary that the same exactness in numbers, rhymes or measure, should be observed in words design'd to be set in that manner, which must ever be observed in the formation of odes and sonnets. For what they call recitative in music, is only a more tuneable speaking, it is a kind of prose in music; its beauty consists in coming nearer nature, and in improving the natural accents of words by more pathetic or emphatical tones.

Perſons Repreſented.

JUPITER.
CADMUS, King of Thebes.
ATHAMAS, a prince of Bœotia, in love with, and deſigned to marry Semele.
SOMNUS.
APOLLO.
CUPID.
ZEPHYRS.
LOVES.
Shepherds.
Satyrs.

JUNO.
IRIS.
SEMELE, daughter to Cadmus, beloved by, and in love with Jupiter.
INO, ſiſter to Semele, in love with Athamas.
Shepherdeſſes.

Chief Prieſts of Juno, other Prieſts and Augurs.

SCENE, BOEOTIA.

SEMELE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The SCENE is the Temple of JUNO, near the altar is a golden image of the goddeſs. Prieſts are in their ſolemnities, as after a ſacrifice newly offer'd: flames ariſe from the altar, and the ſtatue of JUNO is ſeen to bow.

CADMUS, ATHAMAS, SEMELE, *and* INO.

FIRST PRIEST.

BEHOLD! auſpicious flaſhes riſe;
Juno accepts our ſacrifice;
The grateful odour ſwift aſcends,
And ſee, the golden image bends.

FIRST *and* SECOND PRIEST.

Lucky omens bleſs our rites,
And ſure ſucceſs ſhall crown your loves;
Peaceful days and fruitful nights
Attend the pair that ſhe approves.

Cad. Daughter, obey,
Hear, and obey.
With kind conſenting
Eaſe a parent's care;
Invent no new delay.

Atha. O hear a faithful lover's pray'r;
On this auſpicious day
Invent no new delay.

CADMUS *and* ATHAMAS.

Hear, and obey;
Invent no new delay
On this auſpicious day.
Seme. apart. Ah me!
What refuge now is left me?
How various, how tormenting,
Are my miſeries!
O Jove aſſiſt me.
Can Semele forego thy love,
And to a mortal's paſſion yield?
Thy vengeance will o'ertake
Such perfidy.
If I deny, my father's wrath I fear.
O Jove, in pity teach me which to chuſe,
Incline me to comply, or help me to refuſe.
Atha. See, ſhe bluſhing turns her eyes;
See, with ſighs her boſom panting:
If from love thoſe ſighs ariſe,
Nothing to my bliſs is wanting.
Hymen haſte, thy torch prepare,
Love already his has lighted,
One ſoft ſigh has cur'd deſpair,
And more than my paſt pains requited.
Ino. Alas! ſhe yields,
And has undone me:
I can no longer hide my paſſion;
It muſt have vent———
Or inward burning
Will conſume me.
O Athamas———
I cannot utter it———
Atha. On me fair Ino calls
With mournful accent,
Her colour fading,
And her eyes o'erflowing!
Ino. O Semele!
Seme. On me ſhe calls,

Yet ſeems to ſhun me!
What would my ſiſter?
Speak———
Ino. Thou haſt undone me.
Cad. Why doſt thou thus untimely grieve,
And all our ſolemn rites prophane?
Can he, or ſhe, thy woes relieve?
Or I? of whom doſt thou complain?
Ino. Of all? but all, I fear, in vain.
Atha. Can I thy woes relieve?
Seme. Can I aſſwage thy pain?

CADMUS, ATHAMAS, *and* SEMELE.

Of whom doſt thou complain?
Ino. Of all; but all, I fear, in vain.

[*It lightens, and thunder is heard at a diſtance; then a noiſe of rain; the fire is ſuddenly extinguiſhed on the altar: the Chief-Prieſt comes forward.*

1ſt *Prieſt.* Avert theſe omens, all ye pow'rs!
Some God averſe our holy rites controls,
O'erwhelm'd with ſudden night, the day expires!
Ill-boding thunder on the right hand rolls,
And Jove himſelf deſcends in ſhow'rs,
To quench our late propitious fires.

CHORUS *of* PRIESTS.

Avert theſe omens all ye pow'rs!
2d *Prieſt.* Again auſpicious flaſhes riſe,
Juno accepts our ſacrifice.

[*Flames are again kindled on the altar, and the Statue nods.*

3d *Prieſt.* Again the ſickly flame decaying dies:
Juno aſſents, but angry Jove denies.

[*The fire is again extinguiſh'd.*

ATHAMAS [*Apart.*]

Thy aid, connubial Juno, Athamas implores.

SEMELE [*Apart.*]

Thee Jove, and thee alone, thy Semele adores.

[*A loud clap of thunder; the altar ſinks.*

1ſt *Prieſt.* Ceaſe, ceaſe your vows, 'tis impious to proceed;
Be gone, and fly this holy place with ſpeed.

This dreadful conflict is of dire preſage;
Be gone, and fly from Jove's impending rage.

[*All but the Prieſts come forward. The ſcene cloſes on the Prieſts, and ſhews to view the front and outſide of the Temple,* Cadmus *leads off* Semele, *Attendants follow.* Athamas *and* Ino *remain.*

SCENE II.

ATHAMAS, INO.

ATHAMAS.

O Athamas, what torture haſt thou borne!
And O, what haſt thou yet to bear!
From love, from hope, from near poſſeſſion torn,
And plung'd at once in deep deſpair.

Ino. Turn, hopeleſs lover, turn thy eyes,
And ſee a maid bemoan,
In flowing tears and aking ſighs,
Thy woes too like her own.

Atha. She weeps!
The gentle maid, in tender pity,
Weeps to behold my miſery!
So Semele wou'd melt
To ſee another mourn.
Such unavailing mercy is in beauty found,
Each nymph bemoans the ſmart
Of every bleeding heart,
But that where ſhe herſelf inflicts the wound.

Ino. Ah me, too much inflicted!

Atha. Can pity for another's pain
Cauſe ſuch anxiety!

Ino. Cou'dſt thou but gueſs
What I endure!
Or could I tell thee———
Thou, Athamas,
Wouldſt for a while

Thy ſorrows ceaſe, a little ceaſe,
And liſten for a while
To my lamenting.

Athа. Of grief too ſenſible
I know your tender nature.
Well I remember,
When I oft have ſu'd
To cold, diſdainful Semele;
When I with ſcorn have been rejected;
Your tuneful voice my tale would tell,
In pity of my ſad deſpair;
And with ſweet melody, compel
Attention from the flying fair.

Ino. Too well I ſee
Thou wilt not underſtand me.
Whence cou'd proceed ſuch tenderneſs?
Whence ſuch compaſſion?
Inſenſible! ingrate!
Ah no, I cannot blame thee:
For by effects unknown before
Who could the hidden cauſe explore?
Or think that love could act ſo ſtrange a part,
To plead for pity in a rival's heart?

Athа. Ah me, what have I heard!
She does her paſſion own.

Ino. What, had I not deſpair'd,
You never ſhou'd have known.
You've undone me;
Look not on me;
Guilt upbraiding,
Shame invading;
Look not on me;
You've undone me;

Athа. With my life I wou'd atone
Pains you've borne, to me unknown.
Ceaſe, ceaſe to ſhun me.

Ino. Look not on me,
You've undone me.

Athа. Ceaſe ceaſe to ſhun me:

Love, love alone
Has both undone.
Ino, Atha. Love, love alone
Has both undone.

SCENE III.

[*To them*] *Enter* CADMUS *attended.*

CADMUS.

Ah wretched Prince, doom'd to disastrous love!
Ah me, of parents most forlorn!
Prepare, O Athamas, to prove
The sharpest pangs that e'er were born:
Prepare with me our common loss to mourn.
Atha. Can fate, or Semele invent
Another, yet another punishment?
Cad. Wing'd with our fears, and pious haste,
From Juno's fan we fled;
Scarce we the brazen gates had pass'd,
When Semele around her head
With azure flames was grac'd,
Whose lambent glories in her tresses play'd.
While thus we saw with dread surprize,
Swifter than lightning downwards tending
An eagle stoop'd, of mighty size,
On purple wings descending;
Like gold his beak, like stars shone forth his eyes,
His silver plumy breast with snow contending:
Sudden he snatch'd the trembling maid,
And soaring from our sight convey'd;
Diffusing ever as he lessening flew
Celestial odour, and ambrosial dew.
Atha. O prodigy, to me of dire portent!
Ino. To me, I hope, of fortunate event.

SCENE IV.

Enter to them the CHIEF-PRIEST, *with* AUGURS *and other* PRIESTS.

CADMUS.

See, see Jove's Priests, and holy Augurs come:
Speak, speak, of Semele and me declare the doom.

1st *Aug.* Hail Cadmus, hail! Jove salutes the Theban king.
Cease your mourning,
Joys returning,
Songs of mirth and triumph sing.

2d *Aug.* Endless pleasure, endless love
Semele enjoys above;
On her bosom Jove reclining,
Useless now his thunder lyes;
To her arms his bolts resigning,
And his lightning to her eyes.
Endless pleasure, endless love
Semele enjoys above;

1st *Priest.* Haste, haste, haste, to sacrifice prepare,
Once to the thunderer, once to the fair,
Jove and Semele implore:
Jove and Semele like honours share;
Whom gods admire, let men adore.
Haste, haste, haste, to sacrifice prepare.

CHORUS *of* Priests *and* Augurs.

Hail, Cadmus, hail! Jove salutes the Theban king.
Cease your mourning,
Joys returning,
Songs of mirth and triumph sing. [Exeunt omnes.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The SCENE is a pleasant country, the prospect is terminated by a beautiful mountain adorn'd with woods and water-falls. JUNO and IRIS descend in different machines. JUNO in a chariot drawn by peacocks; IRIS on a rain-bow; they alight and meet.

JUNO.

IRIS, impatient of thy stay,
From Samos have I wing'd my way,
To meet thy slow return;
Thou know'st what cares infest
My anxious breast;
And how with rage and jealousy I burn:
Then why this long delay?

Iris. With all his speed not yet the sun
Through half his race has run,
Since I to execute thy dread command
Have thrice encompass'd seas and land,

Juno. Say, where is Semele's abode?
'Till that I know,
Though thou hadst on lightning rode,
Still thou tedious art and slow.

Iris. Look where Citheron proudly stands,
Bœotia parting from Cecropian lands:
High on the summit of that hill,
Beyond the reach of mortal eyes,
By Jove's command, and Vulcan's skill,
Behold a new-erected palace rise.

There from mortal cares retiring,
She resides in sweet retreat;
On her pleasure, Jove requiring,
All the loves and graces wait.

Thither Flora the fair
With her train must repair,
Her amorous Zephyr attending,
All her sweets she must bring
To continue the spring,
Which never must there know an ending.

Bright Aurora, 'tis said,
From her old lover's bed
No more the grey orient adorning,
For the future must rise
From fair Semele's eyes,
And wait 'till she wakes for the morning.

Juno. No more———I'll hear no more.
How long must I endure ?———
How long must indignation burning,
From impious mortals
Bear this insolence !
Awake Saturnia from thy lethargy ;
Seize, destroy the curst adultress.
Scale proud Citherion's top ;
Snatch her, tear her in thy fury,
And down, down to the flood of Acheron
Let her fall, let her fall, fall, fall ;
Rolling down the depths of night,
Never more to behold the light.
If I am own'd above,
Sister and wife of Jove ;
(Sister at least I sure may claim,
Tho' wife be a neglected name.)
If I th' imperial sceptre sway——I swear
By hell———
Tremble thou universe this oath to hear,
Not one of curst Agenor's race to spare.
Iris. Hear, mighty queen, while I recount
What obstacles you must surmount ;

With adamant the gates are barr'd,
Whose entrance two fierce dragons guard;
At each approach they lash their forky stings,
And clap their brazen wings:
And as their scaly horrors rise,
They all at once disclose
A thousand fiery eyes,
Which never know repose.

Juno. Hence Iris, hence away,
Far from the realms of day;
O'er Scythian hills to the Meotian lake
A speedy flight we'll take:
There Somnus I'll compell
His downy bed to leave and silent cell:
With noise and light I will his peace molest,
Nor shall he sink again to downy rest,
'Till to my vow'd revenge he grants supplies,
And seals with sleep the wakeful dragons eyes. [*They ascend.*

SCENE II.

The SCENE changes to an apartment in the palace of SEMELE; she is sleeping; LOVES and ZEPHYRS waiting.

Cup. See, after the toils of an amorous fight,
Where weary and pleas'd, still panting she lyes;
While yet in her mind she repeats the delight,
How sweet is the slumber that steals on her eyes!
Come Zephyrs, come, while Cupid sings,
Fan her with your silky wings;
New desire
I'll inspire,
And revive the dying flames;
Dance around her
While I wound her,
And with pleasure fill her dreams.

A dance of Zephyrs, after which Semele awakes, and riſes.

Seme. O ſleep, why doſt thou leave me?
Why thy viſionary joys remove?
O ſleep again deceive me,
To my arms reſtore my wand'ring love.

SCENE III.

Two LOVES lead in JUPITER. While he meets and embraces SEMELE, CUPID ſings.

Cup. Sleep forſaking,
Seize him waking;
Love has ſought him,
Back has brought him;
Mighty Jove tho' he be,
And tho' Love cannot ſee,
Yet by feeling about
He has found him out,
And has caught him.

Seme. Let me not another moment
Bear the pangs of abſence.
Since you have form'd my ſoul for loving,
No more afflict me
With doubts and fears, and cruel jealouſies.

Jupi. Lay your doubts and fears aſide,
And for joy's alone provide;
Tho' this human form I wear,
Think not I man's falſehood bear.
You are mortal, and require
Time to reſt and to reſpire.
Nor was I abſent,
Tho' a while withdrawn,
To take petitions
From the needy world.
While love was with thee

I was preſent;
Love and I are one.
Seme. If chearful hopes
And chilling fears,
Alternate ſmiles,
Alternate tears,
Eager panting,
Fond deſiring,
With grief now fainting,
Now with bliſs expiring;
If this be love, not you alone,
But love and I are one.
Both. If this be love, not you alone,
But love and I are one.
Seme. Ah me!
Jupi. Why ſighs my Semele?
What gentle ſorrow
Swells thy ſoft boſom?
Why tremble thoſe fair eyes
With interrupted light?
Where hov'ring for a vent,
Amidſt their humid fires,
Some new-form'd wiſh appears:
Speak, and obtain.
Seme. At my own happineſs
I ſigh and tremble;
Mortals whom gods affect
Have narrow limits ſet to life,
And cannot long be bleſs'd.
Or if they could——
A god may prove inconſtant.
Jupi. Beware of jealouſy;
Had Juno not been jealous,
I ne'er had left Olympus,
Nor wander'd in my love.
Seme. With my frailty don't upbraid me,
I am a woman as you made me,

Cauſeleſs doubting or deſpairing,
Raſhly truſting, idly fearing.
If obtaining
Still complaining;
If conſenting
Still repenting;
Moſt complying
When denying,
And to be follow'd only flying.
With my frailty don't upbraid me,
I am a woman as you made me.

Jupi. Thy ſex of Jove's the maſter-piece,
Thou of thy ſex art moſt excelling.
Frailty in thee is ornament,
In thee perfection.
Giv'n to agitate the mind,
And keep awake men's paſſions;
To baniſh indolence,
And dull repoſe,
The foes of tranſport
And of pleaſure.

Seme. Still I am mortal,
Still a woman;
And ever when you leave me,
Tho' compaſs'd round with deities
Of loves and graces,
A fear invades me,
And conſcious of a nature
Far inferior,
I ſeek for ſolitude,
And ſhun ſociety.

Jupi. apart.] Too well I read her meaning,
But muſt not underſtand her.
Aiming at immortality
With dangerous ambition,
She wou'd dethrone Saturnia;
And reigning in my heart

Would reign in Heav'n.
Leſt ſhe too much explain,
I muſt with ſpeed amuſe her;
It gives the lover double pain,
Who hears his nymph complain,
And hearing muſt refuſe her.

Seme. Why do you ceaſe to gaze upon me?
Why muſing turn away?
Some other object
Seems more pleaſing.

Jupi. Thy needleſs fears remove,
My faireſt, lateſt, only love.
By my command,
Now at this inſtant,
Two winged Zephyrs
From her downy bed
Thy much-lov'd Ino bear;
And both together
Waft her hither
Thro' the balmy air.

Seme. Shall I my ſiſter ſee!
The dear companion
Of my tender years.

Jupi. See, ſhe appears,
But ſees not me;
For I am viſible
Alone to thee.
While I retire, riſe and meet her,
And with welcomes greet her.

Now all this ſcene ſhall to Arcadia turn,
The ſeat of happy nymphs and ſwains;
There without the rage of jealouſy they burn,
And taſte the ſweets of love without its pains.

SCENE IV.

JUPITER retires. SEMELE and INO meet and embrace. The SCENE is totally changed, and shews an open country. Several Shepherds and Shepherdesses enter. SEMELE and INO having entertained each other in dumb shew, sit and observe the rural sports, which end the second Act.

ACT III. SCENE I.

The SCENE is the cave of Sleep. The god of Sleep lying on his bed. A soft symphony is heard. Then the music changes to a different movement.

JUNO *and* IRIS.

JUNO.

SOMNUS, awake.
Raise thy declining head;
Iris. Thyself forsake,
And lift up thy heavy lids of lead.
Som. waking.] Leave me, loathsome light;
Receive me, silent night.
Lethe, why does thy ling'ring current cease?
O murmur, murmur me again to peace.
[*Sinks down again.*
Iris. Dull God, canst thou attend the waters' fall,
And not hear Saturnia call!
Juno. Peace, Iris, peace, I know how to charm him:
Pasithea's name alone can warm him.

JUNO, IRIS.

Only Love on sleep has pow'r;
O'er gods and men
Tho' Somnus reign,
Love alternate has his hour.

Juno. Somnus, ariſe,
Diſcloſe thy tender eyes;
For Paſithea's ſight
Endure the light:
Somnus, ariſe.

Som. riſing.] More ſweet is that name
Than a ſoft purling ſtream;
With pleaſure repoſe I'll forſake,
If you'll grant me but her to ſoothe me awake.

Juno. My will obey,
She ſhall be thine.
Thou with thy ſofter pow'rs
Firſt Jove ſhall captivate:
To Morpheus then give order,
Thy various miniſter,
That with a dream in ſhape of Semele,
But far more beautiful,
And more alluring,
He may invade the ſleeping deity;
And more to agitate
His kindling fire,
Still let the fantom ſeem
To fly before him,
That he may wake impetuous,
Furious in deſire;
Unable to refuſe whatever boon
Her coyneſs ſhall require.

Som. I tremble to comply.

Juno. To me thy leaden rod reſign,
To charm the ſentinels
On mount Citheron;
Then caſt a ſleep on mortal Ino,
That I may ſeem her form to wear
When I to Semele appear.
Obey my will, thy rod reſign,
And Paſithea ſhall be thine.

Som. All I muſt grant, for all is due
To Paſithea, love and you.

Juno. Away let us haſte,
Let neither have reſt,
'Till the ſweeteſt of pleaſures we prove;
'Till of vengeance poſſeſs'd
I doubly am bleſs'd,
And thou art made happy in love.

[*Ex.* Juno *and* Iris.

[Somnus *retires within his cave, the ſcene changes to* Semele's *apartment.*

SCENE II.

SEMELE, *alone.*

SEMELE.

I love, and am lov'd, yet more I deſire;
Ah, how fooliſh a thing is fruition!
As one paſſion cools, ſome other takes fire,
And I'm ſtill in a longing condition.
Whate'er I poſſeſs
Soon ſeems an exceſs.
For ſomething untry'd I petition;
Tho' daily I prove
The pleaſures of love,
I die for the joys of ambition.

SCENE III.

Enter JUNO *as* Ino, *with a mirrour in her hand.*

JUNO [*apart.*]

Thus ſhaped like Ino,
With eaſe I ſhall deceive her,
And in this mirrour ſhe ſhall ſee
Herſelf as much transform'd as me.
Do I ſome goddeſs ſee!
Or is it Semele?

Seme. Dear sister, speak,
Whence this astonishment?
Juno. Your charms improving
To divine perfection,
Shew you were late admitted
Among celestial beauties.
Has Jove consented?
And are you made immortal?
Seme. Ah no, I still am mortal;
Nor am I sensible
Of any change or new perfection.

JUNO. [*Giving her the glass.*

Behold in this mirrour
Whence comes my surprize;
Such lustre and terrour
Unite in your eyes,
That mine cannot fix on a radiance so bright;
'Tis unsafe for the sense, and too slippery for sight.

SEMELE. [*Looking in the glass.*

O ecstacy of happiness!
Celestial graces
I discover in each feature!
Myself I shall adore,
If I persist in gazing;
No object sure before
Was ever half so pleasing.
How did that glance become me?
But take this flattering mirrour from me.
Yet once again let me view me.
Ah charming all o'er.

[*Offering the glass, withdraws her hand again.*

Here——hold, I'll have one look more,
Tho' that look I were sure would undo me.

JUNO. [*Taking the glass from her.*

Be wise as you are beautiful,
Nor lose this opportunity.
When Jove appears,
All ardent with desire,

Refuse his proffer'd flame
'Till you obtain a boon without a name.
Seme. Can that avail me?
Juno. Unknowing your intent,
And eager for possessing,
He unawares will grant
The nameless blessing.
But bind him by the Stygian lake,
Lest lover-like his word he break.
Seme. But how shall I attain
To immortality?
Juno. Conjure him by his oath
Not to approach your bed
In likeness of a mortal,
But like himself the mighty thunderer,
In pomp of majesty,
And heav'nly attire;
As when he proud Saturnia charms,
And with ineffable delights
Fills her encircling arms,
And pays the nuptial rites.
By this conjunction
With entire divinity
You shall partake of heav'nly essence,
And thenceforth leave this mortal state
To reign above,
Ador'd by Jove,
In spite of jealous Juno's hate.
Seme. Thus let my thanks be paid.
Thus let my arms embrace thee;
And when I'm a goddess made,
With charms like mine I'll grace thee.
Juno. Rich odours fill the fragrant air,
And Jove's approach declare.
I must retire———
Seme. Adieu———Your counsel I'll pursue.
Juno. apart.] And sure destruction will ensue.
Vain, wretched fool——[*To her.*] Adieu. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

JUPITER *enters, offers to embrace* SEMELE; *she looks kindly on him, but retires a little from him.*

JUPITER.

Come to my arms, my lovely fair,
Soothe my uneasy care:
In my dream late I woo'd thee,
And in vain I pursu'd thee,
For you fled from my pray'r,
And bid me despair.
Come to my arms, my lovely fair.

Seme. Tho' 'tis easy to please ye,
And hard to deny;
Tho' possessing's a blessing
For which I could die,
I dare not, I cannot comply.

Jupi. When I languish with anguish,
And tenderly sigh,
Can you leave me, deceive me,
And scornfully fly?
Ah, fear not; you must not deny.

SEMELE, JUPITER.

I dare not, I cannot comply.
Ah fear not; you must not deny.

Jupi. O Semele,
Why art thou thus insensible?
Were I a mortal,
Thy barbarous disdaining
Would surely end me,
And death at my complaining
In pity would befriend me.

Seme. I ever am granting,
You always complain;
I always am wanting,
Yet never obtain.

Jupi. Speak, speak your desire,
I'm all over fire.
Say what you require,
I'll grant it——now let us retire.
Seme. Swear by the Stygian lake.
Jupi. By that tremendous flood I swear,
Ye Stygian waters hear,
And thou Olympus shake,
In witness to the oath I take.
[*Thunder heard at a distance, and underneath.*
Seme. You'll grant what I require!
Jupi. I'll grant what you require.
Seme. Then cast off this human shape which you wear.
And Jove, since you are, like Jove too appear;
When next you desire I should charm ye.
As when Juno you bless,
So you me must caress,
And with all your omnipotence arm ye.
Jupi. Ah! take heed what you press,
For beyond all redress,
Should I grant what you wish, I shall harm ye.
Seme. I'll be pleas'd with no less,
Than my wish in excess:
Let the oath you have taken alarm ye:
Haste, haste, and prepare,
For I'll know what you are;
So with all your omnipotence arm ye.

SCENE V.

She withdraws, JUPITER *remains pensive and dejected.*

JUPITER.

Ah! whither is she gone! unhappy fair!
Why did she wish?—Why did I rashly swear?
'Tis past, 'tis past recall,
She must a victim fall.

Anon, when I appear,
The mighty thunderer,
Arm'd with inevitable fire,
She needs muſt inſtantly expire.
'Tis paſt, 'tis paſt recall,
She muſt a victim fall.
My ſofteſt lightning yet I'll try,
And mildeſt melting bolt apply:
In vain—for ſhe was fram'd to prove
None but the lambent flames of love.
'Tis paſt, 'tis paſt recall,
She muſt a victim fall.

SCENE VI.

JUNO *appears in her chariot aſcending.*

JUNO.

Above meaſure
Is the pleaſure
Which my revenge ſupplies.
Love's a bubble,
Gain'd with trouble,
And in poſſeſſing dies.
With what joy ſhall I mount to my heaven again,
At once from my rival and jealouſy freed!
The ſweets of revenge make it worth while to reign,
And heav'n will hereafter be heav'n indeed.
[*She aſcends.*

SCENE VII.

The SCENE opening diſcovers SEMELE lying under a canopy, leaning penſively. While a mournful ſymphony is playing, ſhe looks up and ſees JUPITER deſcending in a black cloud; the motion of the cloud is ſlow. Flaſhes of lightning iſſue from either ſide, and thunder is heard grumbling in the air.

SEMELE.

Ah me! too late I now repent
My pride and impious vanity.
He comes! far off his lightnings scorch me.
———I feel my life consuming:
I burn, I burn——I faint—for pity I implore——
O help, O help——I can no more. [*Dies.*

[*As the cloud which contains* Jupiter *is arrived just over the canopy of* Semele, *a sudden and great flash of lightning breaks forth, and a clap of loud thunder is heard; when at one instant* Semele, *with the palace and the whole present scene, disappears, and* Jupiter *reascends swiftly. The scene totally changed represents a pleasant country, mount* Citheron *closing the prospect.*

SCENE VIII.

Enter CADMUS, ATHAMAS *and* INO.

INO.

Of my ill-boding dream
Behold the dire event.

CADMAS, ATHAMUS.

O terror and astonishment!
Ino. How was I hence remov'd,
Or hither how return'd, I know not;
So long a trance with-held me.
But Hermes in a vision told me
(As I have now related)
The fate of Semele;
And added as from me he fled,
That Jove ordain'd I Athamas should wed.
Cad. Be Jove in every thing obey'd [*Joins their hands.*
Atha. Unworthy of your charms, myself I yield;
Be Jove's commands and yours fulfill'd.
Cad. See from above the bellying clouds descend,
And big with some new wonder this way tend.

SCENE IX

A bright cloud descends and rests on Mount Citheron, *which opening, discovers* APOLLO *seated in it as the God of prophesy.*

APOLLO.

Apollo comes to relieve your care,
And future happiness declare.
From tyrannous love all your sorrows proceed,
From tyrannous love you shall quickly be freed.
A God he shall prove
More mighty than love;
And a sovereign juice shall invent,
Which antidote pure
The sick lover shall cure,
And sighing and sorrow for ever prevent.
Then mortals be merry, and scorn the blind boy;
Your hearts from his arrows strong wine shall defend:
Each day and each night you shall revel in joy,
For when Bacchus is born, love's reign's at an end.

CHORUS.

Then mortals be merry, &c.

Dance of Satyrs.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

CONCERNING

HUMOUR IN COMEDY.

A

LETTER.

CONCERNING

HUMOUR IN COMEDY.

A

LETTER.

DEAR SIR,

YOU write to me, that you have entertained yourself two or three days, with reading several comedies of several authors; and your observation is, that there is more of Humour in our English writers, than in any of the other comic poets, ancient or modern You desire to know my opinion, and at the same time my thought, of that which is generally called Humour in comedy.

I agree with you, in an impartial preference of our English writers, in that particular. But if I tell you my thoughts of Humour, I must at the same time confess, that what I take for true Humour, has not been so often written even by them, as is generally believed: and some who have valued themselves, and have been esteemed by others, for that kind of writing, have seldom touched upon it. To make this appear to the world, would require a long and laboured discourse, and such as I am neither able nor willing to undertake. But such little remarks, as may be contained within the compass of a letter, and such unpremeditated thoughts, as may be communicated between friend and friend, without incurring the censure of the world, or setting up for a dictator, you shall have from me, since you have enjoined it.

To define Humour, perhaps, were as difficult as to define Wit; for like that, it is of infinite variety. To enu-

merate the several Humours of men, were a work as endless, as to sum up their several opinions. And in my mind the *quot homines tot sententiæ*, might have been more properly interpreted of Humour; since there are many men, of the same opinion in many things, who are quite different in humours. But though we cannot certainly tell what Wit is, or what Humour is, yet we may go near to shew something which is not Wit or Humour, and yet often mistaken for both. And since I have mentioned Wit and Humour together, let me make the first distinction between them, and observe to you that Wit is often mistaken for Humour.

I have observed, that when a few things have been wittily and pleasantly spoken by any character in a comedy; it has been very usual for those, who made their remarks on a play while it is acting, to say, "Such a thing is very "humourously spoken: there is a great deal of humour in "that part." Thus the character of the person speaking, may be, surprizingly and pleasantly, is mistaken for a character of humour; which indeed is a character of wit. But there is a great difference between a comedy, wherein there are many things humourously, as they call it, which is pleasantly spoken; and one, where there are several characters of Humour, distinguished by the particular and different humours, appropriated to the several persons represented, and which naturally arise from the different constitutions, complexions, and dispositions of men. The saying of humourous things does not distinguish characters; for every person in a comedy may be allowed to speak them. From a witty man they are expected; and even a fool may be permitted to stumble on them by chance. Though I make a difference between Wit and Humour; yet I do not think that humourous characters exclude wit: no, but the manner of Wit should be adapted to the Humour. As for instance, a character of a splenetic and peevish Humour should have a satirical wit. A jolly and sanguine Humour should have a facetious wit. The former should speak positively; the latter, carelessly: for the former

obſerves and ſhews things as they are; the latter rather overlooks nature, and ſpeaks things as he would have them; and his Wit and Humour have both of them a leſs alloy of judgment than the others.

As Wit, ſo its oppoſite, Folly, " is ſometimes miſtaken " for Humour."

When a poet brings a character on the ſtage, commiting a thouſand abſurdities, and talking impertinencies, roaring aloud, and laughing immoderately, on every, or rather upon no occaſion; is this a character of Humour?

Is any thing more common, than to have a pretended comedy, ſtuffed with ſuch groteſque figures, and farce fools? things, that either are not in nature, or if they are, are monſters, and births of miſchance: and conſequently as ſuch, ſhould be ſtifled, and huddled out of the way, like ſooterkins; that mankind may not be ſhocked with an appearing poſſibility of the degeneration of a god-like ſpecies. For my part, I am as willing to laugh as any body, and as eaſily diverted with an object truly ridiculous: but at the ſame time, I can never care for ſeeing things that force me to entertain low thoughts of my nature. I do not know how it is with others, but I confeſs freely to you, I could never look long upon a monkey, without very mortifying reflections; though I never heard any thing to the contrary, why that creature is not originally of a diſtinct ſpecies. As I do not think Humour excluſive of Wit, neither do I think it inconſiſtent with folly; but I think the follies ſhould be only ſuch, as mens humours may incline them to; and not follies intirely abſtracted from both humour and nature.

Sometimes, " Perſonal defects are miſrepreſented for " humours."

I mean ſometimes characters are barbarouſly expoſed on the ſtage, ridiculing natural deformities, caſual defects in the ſenſes, and infirmities of age. Sure the poet muſt both be very ill-natured himſelf, and think his audience ſo, when he propoſes by ſhewing a man deformed, or deaf, or blind, to give them an agreeable entertainment; and

hopes to raise their mirth, by what is truly an object of compassion. But much need not to be said upon this head to any body, especially to you, who in one of your letters to me concerning Johnson's *Fox*, have justly excepted against this immoral part of ridicule in Corbaccio's character; and there I must agree with you to blame him, whom otherwise I cannot enough admire, for his great mastery of true humour in comedy.

"External habit of body is often mistaken for Humour."

By external habit, I do not mean the ridiculous dress or clothing of a character, though that goes a good way in some received characters: (but undoubtedly a man's humour may incline him to dress differently from other people:) but I mean a singularity of manners, speech, and behaviour, peculiar to all, or most of the same country, trade, profession, or education. I cannot think that a Humour, which is only a habit, or disposition contracted by use or custom; for by a disuse, or compliance with other customs, it may be worn off, or diversified.

"Affectation is generally mistaken for humour."

These are indeed so much alike, that at a distance, they may be mistaken one for the other. For what is Humour in one, may be affectation in another; and nothing is more common, than for some to affect particular ways of saying, and doing things, peculiar to others, whom they admire and would imitate. Humour is the life, affectation the picture. He that draws a character of Affectation shews Humour at the second hand; he at best but publishes a translation, and his pictures are but copies.

But as these two last distinctions are the nicest, so it may be most proper to explain them, by particular instances from some author of reputation. Humour I take, either to be born with us, and so of a natural growth; or else to be grafted into us, by some accidental change in the constitution, or revolution of the internal habit of body; by which it becomes, if I may so call it, naturalized.

Humour is from nature, Habit from cuſtom; and affectation from induſtry.

Humour, ſhews us as we are.

Habit, ſhews us, as we appear under a forcible impreſſion.

Affectation, ſhews what we would be, under a voluntary diſguiſe.

Though here I would obſerve by the way, that a continued affectation may in time become a habit.

The character of Moroſe in the *Silent Woman*, I take to be a character of humour. And I chooſe to inſtance this character to you, from many others of the ſame author, becauſe I know it has been condemned by many as unnatural and farce: and you have yourſelf hinted ſome diſlike of it, for the ſame reaſon, in a letter to me, concerning ſome of Johnſon's plays.

Let us ſuppoſe Moroſe to be a man naturally ſplenetic and melancholy; is there any thing more offenſive to one of ſuch a diſpoſition, than noiſe and clamour? Let any man that has the ſpleen (and there are enough in England) be judge. We ſee common examples of this humour in little every-day. It is ten to one, but three parts in four of the company that you dine with are diſcompoſed and ſtartled at the cutting of a cork, or ſcratching a plate with a knife: it is a proportion of the ſame humour that makes ſuch or any other noiſe offenſive to the perſon that hears it; for there are others who will not be diſturbed at all by it. Well; but Moroſe, you will ſay, is ſo extravagant, he cannot bear any diſcourſe or converſation, above a whiſper. Why, it is his exceſs of this humour, that makes him become ridiculous, and qualifies his character for comedy. If the poet had given him but a moderate proportion of that humour, it is odds but half the audience would have ſided with the character, and have condemned the author, for expoſing a humour which was neither remarkable nor ridiculous. Beſides, the diſtance of the ſtage requires the figure repreſented to be ſomething larger than

the life; and sure a picture may have features larger in proportion, and yet be very like the original. If this exactness of quantity were to be observed in wit, as some would have it in humour; what would become of those characters that are designed for men of wit? I believe if a poet should steal a dialogue of any length, from the extempore discourse of the two wittiest men upon earth, he would find the scene but coldly received by the town. But to the purpose.

The character of Sir John Daw, in the same play, is a character of affectation. He every where discovers an affectation of learning; when he is not only conscious to himself, but the audience also plainly perceives, that he is ignorant. Of this kind are the characters of Thraso in the *Eunuch* of Terence, and Pyrgopolinices in the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus. They affect to be thought valiant, when both themselves and the audience know they are not. Now such a boasting of valour in men, who are really valiant, would undoubtedly be a Humour; for a fiery disposition might naturally throw a man into the same extravagance, which is only affected in the characters I have mentioned.

The character of Cob in *Every man in his Humour*, and most of the under characters in *Bartholomew-fair*, discover only a singularity of manners, appropriated in the several educations and professions of the persons represented. They are not humours, but habits contracted by custom. Under this head may be ranged all country-clowns, sailors, tradesmen, jockeys, gamesters and such like, who make use of cants, or peculiar dialects in their several arts and vocations. One may almost give a receipt for the composition of such a character: for the poet has nothing to do, but to collect a few proper phrases and terms of art, and to make the person apply them, by ridiculous metaphors in his conversation, with characters of different natures. Some late characters of this kind have been very successful; but in my mind they may be painted without much art or labour; since they require little more, than

a good memory and superficial observation. But true Humour cannot be shewn, without a dissection of nature, and a narrow search, to discover the first seeds, from whence it has its root and growth.

If I were to write to the world, I should be obliged to dwell longer upon each of these distinctions and examples; for I know that they would not be plain enough to all readers. But a bare hint is sufficient to inform you of the notions which I have on this subject: and I hope by this time you are of my opinion, that humour is neither wit, nor folly, nor personal defect, nor affectation, nor habit; and yet, that each, and all of these, have been both written and received for humour.

I should be unwilling to venture even on a bare description of humour, much more, to make a definition of it; but now my hand is in, I will tell you what serves me instead of either. I take it to be, "A singular and unavoidable manner of doing or saying any thing, peculiar "and natural to one man only; by which his speech and "actions are distinguished from those of other men."

Our Humour has relation to us, and to what proceeds from us, as the accidents have to a substance; it is a colour, taste and smell, diffused through all; though our actions are never so many, and different in form, they are all splinters of the same wood, and have naturally one complexion; which though it may be disguised by art, yet cannot be wholly changed: we may paint it with other colours, but we cannot change the grain. So the natural sound of an instrument will be distinguished, though the notes expressed by it are never so various, and the divisions never so many. Dissimulation may, by degrees, become more easy to our practice; but it can never absolutely transubstantiate us into what we would seem: it will always be in some proportion a violence upon nature.

A man may change his opinion, but I believe he will find it a difficulty to part with his Humour; and there is nothing more provoking, than the being made sensible of

that difficulty. Sometimes, one shall meet with those who perhaps, innocently enough, but at the same time impertinently, will ask the question; "Why are you not merry? "Why are you not gay, pleasant and chearful?" Then instead of answering, could I ask such one; "Why are you not "handsome? Why have you not black eyes, and a better "complexion?" Nature abhors to be forced.

The two famous philosophers of Ephesus and Abdera, have their different sects at this day. Some weep, and others laugh at one and the same thing.

I do not doubt but you have observed several men laugh when they are angry; others who are silent; some that are loud: yet I cannot suppose that it is the passion of anger which is in itself different, or more or less in one than the other; but that it is the Humour of the man that is predominant, and urges him to express it in that manner. Demonstrations of pleasure are as various; one man has a humour of retiring from all company, when any thing has happened to please him beyond expectation; he hugs himself alone, and thinks it an addition to the pleasure to keep it secret. Another is upon thorns till he has made proclamation of it; and must make other people sensible of his happiness, before he can be so himself. So it is in grief, and other passions. Demonstrations of love, and the effects of that passion upon several humours, are infinitely different; but here the Ladies who abound in servants are the best judges. Talking of the Ladies, methinks something should be observed of the humour of the fair sex; since they are sometimes so kind as to furnish out a character for comedy. But I must confess I have never made any observation of what I apprehend to be true humour in women. Perhaps passions are too powerful in that sex, to let humour have its course; or may be, by reason of their natural coldness, humour cannot exert itself to that extravagant degree, which it often does in the male sex. For if ever any thing does appear comical or ridiculous in a woman, I think it is little more than an acquired folly, or an affectation. We may call them the weaker sex, but

I think the true reaſon is, becauſe our follies are ſtronger, and our faults are more prevailing.

One might think that the diverſity of humour, which muſt be allowed to be diffuſed throughout mankind, might afford endleſs matter for the ſupport of comedies. But when we come cloſely to conſider that point, and nicely to diſtinguiſh the difference of humours, I believe we ſhall find the contrary. For though we allow every man ſomething of his own, and a peculiar humour; yet every man has it not in quantity to become remarkable by it: or, if many do become remarkable by their humours, yet all thoſe humours may not be diverting. Nor is it only requiſite to diſtinguiſh what humour will be diverting, but alſo how much of it, what part of it to ſhew in light, and what to caſt in ſhades; how to ſet it off by preparatory ſcenes, and by oppoſing other humours to it in the ſame ſcene. Through a wrong judgment, ſometimes, mens humours may be oppoſed when there is really no ſpecific difference between them; only a greater proportion of the ſame, in one than the other, occaſioned by his having more phlegm, or choler, or whatever the conſtitution is, from whence their humours derive their ſource.

There is infinitely more to be ſaid on this ſubject; though perhaps I have already ſaid too much; but I have ſaid it to a friend, who I am ſure will not expoſe it, if he does not approve of it. I believe the ſubject is entirely new, and was never touched upon before; and if I would have any one to ſee this private eſſay, it ſhould be ſome one, who might be provoked by my errors in it, to publiſh a more judicious treatiſe on the ſubject. Indeed I wiſh it were done, that the world being a little acquainted with the ſcarcity of true humour, and the difficulty of finding and ſhewing it, might look a little more favourably on the labours of them who endeavour to ſearch into nature for it, and lay it open to the public view.

I do not ſay but that very entertaining and uſeful characters, and proper for comedy, may be drawn from affectations, and thoſe other qualities which I have endea-

voured to distinguish from humour; but I would not have such imposed on the world for humour, nor esteemed of equal value with it. It were, perhaps, the work of a long life to make one comedy true in all its parts, and to give every character in it a true and distinct humour. Therefore, every poet must be beholden to other helps, to make out his number of ridiculous characters. But I think such a one deserves to be broke, who makes all false musters; who does not shew one true humour in a comedy, but entertains his audience to the end of the play with every thing out of nature.

I will but make one observation to you more, and have done; and that is grounded upon an observation of your own, and which I mentioned at the beginning of my letter, *viz.* that there is more of humour in our English comic writers than in any others. I do not at all wonder at it, for I look upon humour to be almost of English growth; at least, it does not seem to have found such encrease on any other soil. And what appears to me to be the reason of it, is the great freedom, privilege, and liberty which the common people of England enjoy. Any man that has a humour, is under no restraint, or fear of giving it vent. They have a proverb among them, which, may be, will shew the bent and genius of the people, as well as a longer discourse: "He that will have a May-pole, shall "have a May-pole." This is a maxim with them, and their practice is agreeable to it. I believe something considerable too may be ascribed to their feeding so much on flesh, and the grossness of their diet in general. But I have done, let the physicians agree that. Thus you have my thoughts of Humour, to my power of expressing them in so little time and compass. You will be kind to shew me wherein I have erred; and as you are very capable of giving me instruction, so, I think I have a very just title to demand it from you; being without reserve,

July 10. 1695.

Your real friend, and humble servant,

WILL. CONGREVE.

AMENDMENTS

OF

Mr COLLIER's

FALSE and IMPERFECT CITATIONS, &c.

FROM THE

OLD BACHELOR,	LOVE for LOVE,
DOUBLE DEALER,	MOURNING BRIDE.

" Quem recitas meus eſt O Fidentine libellus,
" Sed male dum recitas incipit eſſe tuus." MART.

" Graviter, et iniquo animo, maledicta tua paterer, ſi te
" ſcirem judicio magis, quam morbo animi, petulentia iſta
" uti. Sed, quoniam in te neque modum, neque mode-
" ſtiam ullam animadverto, reſpondebo tibi: uti, ſi quam
" maledicendo voluptatem cepiſti, eam male-audiendo
" amittas." SALLUST. DECL.

AMENDMENTS

OF

MR COLLIER'S

FALSE and IMPERFECT CITATIONS, &c.

I HAVE been told by some, that they would think me very idle, if I threw away any time in taking notice even of so much of Mr Collier's late treatise of the immorality, &c. of the English stage, as related to myself, in respect of some plays written by me: for that his malicious and strained interpretations of my words were so gross and palpable, that any indifferent and unprejudiced reader would immediately condemn him upon his own evidence, and acquit me before I could make my defence.

On the other hand, I have been tax'd of lazines, and too much security, in neglecting thus long to do myself a necessary right, which might be effected with so very little pains; since very little more is requisite in my vindication than to represent, truly and at length, those passages which Mr Collier has shewn imperfectly, and, for the most part, by halves. I would rather be thought idle than lazy; and so the last advice prevailed with me.

I have no intention to examine all the absurdities and falshoods in Mr Collier's book; to use the gentleman's own metaphor in his preface, "An inventory of such a "ware house would be a large work." My detection of his malice and ignorance, of his sophistry and vast assurance, will ly within a narrow compass, and only bear a proportion to so much of his book as concerns myself.

Leaſt of all, would I undertake to defend the corruptions of the ſtage. Indeed if I were ſo inclined, Mr Collier has given me no occaſion; for the greater part of thoſe examples which he has produced, are only demonſtrations of his own impurity; they only ſavour of his utterance, and were ſweet enough till tainted by his breath.

I will not juſtify any of my own errors; I am ſenſible of many; and if Mr Collier has by any accident ſtumbled on one or two, I will freely give them up to him, *Nullum unquam ingenium placuit ſine venia.* But I hope I have done nothing that can deprive me of the benefit of my clergy; and though Mr Collier himſelf were the ordinary, I may hope to be acquitted.

My intention, therefore, is to do little elſe, but to reſtore thoſe paſſages to their primitive ſtation, which have ſuffered ſo much in being tranſplanted by him: I will remove them from this dunghill, and replant them in the field of nature; and when I have waſhed them of that filth which they have contracted in paſſing through his very dirty hands, let their own innocence protect them.

Mr Collier, in the high vigour of his obſcenity, firſt commits a rape upon my words, and then arraigns them of immodeſty; he has barbarity enough to accuſe the very virgins that he has deflowered, and to make ſure of their condemnation, he has himſelf made them guilty: but he forgets that while he publiſhes their ſhame, he divulges his own.

His artifice, to make words guilty of profaneneſs, is of the ſame nature; for where the expreſſion is unblameable in its own clear and genuine ſignification, he enters into it himſelf like the evil ſpirit; he poſſeſſes the innocent phraſe, and makes it bellow forth his own blaſphemies; ſo * "that one would think the muſe was legion"

To reprimand him a little in his own words, if theſe paſſages produced by Mr Collier † are obſcene and profane, "why were they raked in and diſturbed, unleſs it were to

* Coll. p. 81. † p. 70, 71,

"conjure up vice, and revive impurities? Indeed Mr Collier has a very untoward way with him; his pen has such "a libertine ſtroke, that it is a queſtion whether the "practice or the reproof be the more licentious.

"He teaches thoſe vices he would correct, and writes "more like a pimp than a p——. Since the buſineſs muſt "be undertaken, why was not the thought blanched, the "expreſſion made remote, and the ill features caſt into "ſhadows?" So far from this, which is his own inſtruction in his own words, is Mr Collier's way of proceeding, that he has blackened the thoughts with his own ſmut; the expreſſion that was remote he has brought nearer; and left by being brought near, its native innocence might be more viſible, he has frequently varied it, he has new-molded it, and ſtamped his own image on it; ſo that it at length is become current deformity, and fit to be paid in the devil's exchequer.

I will therefore take the liberty to exorciſe this evil ſpirit, and whip him out of my plays, where-ever I can meet with him. Mr Collier has reſerved the ſtory which he relates from Tertullian *; and after his viſitation of the play-houſe, returns, having left the devil behind him.

If I do not return his civilities in calling him names, it is becauſe I am not very well verſed in his *Nomenclatures*; therefore for his foot-pads, which he calls us in his preface, and for his buffoons and ſlaves in the *Saturnalia*, which he frequently beſtows on us in the reſt of his book †, I will only call him Mr Collier; and that I will call him as often as I think he ſhall deſerve it.

Before I proceed, for method's ſake, I muſt premiſe ſome few things to the reader, which if he thinks in his conſcience are too much to be granted me, I deſire he would proceed no farther in his peruſal of theſe animadverſions, but return to Mr Collier's Short view, *&c.*

Firſt, I deſire that I may lay down Ariſtotle's definition of comedy; which has been the compaſs by which all the comic poets, ſince his time, have ſteered their courſe.

* P. 257. † P. 81. 63. 175.

I mean them whom Mr Collier so very frequently calls Comedians; for the distinction between *Comicus* and *Comœdus*, and *Tragicus* and *Tragœdus* is what he has not met with in the long progress of his reading.

Comedy (says Aristotle) is an imitation of the worse sort of people. Μίμησις φαυλοτέρων, *imitatio pejorum.* He does not mean the worse sort of people in respect to their quality, but in respect to their manners. This is plain, from his telling you immediately after, that he does not mean Κατὰ πᾶσαν κακίαν, relating to all kinds of vice: there are crimes too daring and too horrid for comedy. But the vices most frequent, and which are the common practice of the looser sort of livers, are the subject matter of comedy. He tells us further, that they must be exposed after a ridiculous manner: for men are to be laughed out of their vices in comedy; the business of comedy is to delight, as well as to instruct: and as vicious people are made ashamed of their follies or faults, by seeing them exposed in a ridiculous manner, so are good people at once both warned and diverted at their expence.

Thus much I thought necessary to premise, that by shewing the nature and end of comedy, we may be prepared to expect characters agreeable to it.

Secondly, Since comic poets are obliged by the laws of comedy, and to the intent that comedy may answer its true end and purpose abovementioned, to represent vicious and foolish characters; in consideration of this, I desire that it may not be imputed to the persuasion or private sentiments of the author, if at any time one of these vicious characters in any of his plays shall behave himself foolishly or immorally in word or deed. I hope I am not yet unreasonable; it were very hard that a painter should be believed to resemble all the ugly faces that he draws.

Thirdly, I must desire the impartial reader, not to consider any expression or passage cited from any play, as it appears in Mr Collier's book; nor to pass any sentence or censure upon it, out of its proper scene, or alienated from the character by which it is spoken; for in that

place alone, and in his mouth alone, can it have its proper and true signification.

I cannot think it reasonable, because Mr Collier is pleased to write one chapter of immodesty, and another of profaneness, that therefore every expression traduced by him under those heads, shall be condemned as obscene and profane immediately, and without any further enquiry. Perhaps Mr Collier is acquainted with the *deceptio visus*, and presents objects to the view through a stained glass; things may appear seemingly profane, when in reality they are only seen through a profane *medium*, and the true colour is dissembled by the help of a sophistical varnish: therefore, I demand the privilege of the *habeas corpus* act, that the prisoners may have liberty to remove, and to appear before a just judge in an open and an uncounterfeit light.

Fourthly, Because Mr Collier, in his chapter of the profaneness of the stage, has founded great part of his accusation upon the liberty which poets take of using some words in their plays, which have been sometimes employed by the translators of the holy scriptures; I desire that the following distinction may be admitted, *viz.* That when words are applied to sacred things, and with a purpose to treat of sacred things, they ought to be understood accordingly: but when they are otherwise applied, the diversity of the subject gives a diversity of signification. And in truth, he might as well except against the common use of the alphabet in poetry, because the same letters are necessary to the spelling of words which are mentioned in sacred writ.

Though I have thought it requisite, and but reasonable to premise these few things, to which, as to so many *postulata*, I may, when occasion offers, refer myself; yet if the reader should have any objection to the latitude which at first sight they may seem to comprehend, I dare venture to assure him that it shall be removed by the caution which I shall use, and those limits by which I shall restrain myself, when I shall judge it proper for me to refer to them.

It may not be impertinent in this place, to remind the reader of a very common expedient, which is made use of to recommend the instruction of our plays; which is this. After the action of the play is over, and the delight of the representation at an end; there is generally care taken, that the moral of the whole shall be summed up, and delivered to the audience, in the very last and concluding lines of the poem. The intention of this is, that the delight of the representation may not so strongly possess the minds of the audience, as to make them forget or oversee the instruction: it is the last thing said, that it may make the last impression; and it is always comprehended in a few lines, and put into rhyme, that it may be easy and engaging to the memory.

Mr Collier divides his charge against the stage into these four heads, immodesty, profaneness, abuse of the clergy, and encouragement of immorality.

I have yet written but four poor plays; and this author, out of his very particular favour to me, has found the means to accuse them every one of one or more of these four crimes. I will examine each in its turn, by his citations; and begin with the plays in the order that they were written.

In his chapter of the immodesty of the stage, he has not made any quotation from my comedies: but in general, finds fault with the lightness of some characters. He mentions slightly *, and, I think, without any accusation, Belinda, in the *Old Bachelor*, and Miss Prue in *Love for Love*. Miss Prue, he says, is represented "silly to screen her im-"pudence, which amounts to this confession, that wo-"men, when they have their understandings about them, "ought to converse otherwise †." I grant it; this is in truth the moral of the character. If Mr Collier would examine still at this rate, we should agree very well. Belinda he produces as a character "under disorders of liberty ‡;" this last is what I do not understand, and therefore desire

* P. 10. † P. 11. ‡ P. 12.

to be excuſed, if I can make no anſwer to it. I only refer thoſe two characters to the judgment of any impartial reader, to determine whether they are repreſented ſo as to engage any ſpectator to imitate the impudence of one, or the affectation of the other; and whether they are not both ridiculed rather than recommended.

But he proceeds, "*The Double-Dealer* is particularly remarkable. There are but four ladies in this play, and "three of the biggeſt of them are whores *." Theſe are very big words; very much too big for the ſenſe; for to ſay "three of the biggeſt," when there are but four in number, is ſtark nonſenſe; whatever the matter may be in this gentleman's book, I perceive his ſtile at leaſt is admirable.

Well, ſuppoſe he had ſaid——and the three biggeſt, *etc.* for I am ſure he cannot part with "biggeſt," he has occaſion to uſe it ſo often in the reſt of his book. But mark, he gives us an inſtance of his big good breeding. "A "great compliment to quality, to tell them, there is not "above a quarter of them honeſt!" This computation I ſuppoſe he makes by the help of political arithmetic. As thus; the ſtage is the image of the world; by the men and women repreſented there, are ſignified all the men and women in the world; ſo that if four women are ſhewn upon the ſtage, and three of them are vicious, it is as much as to ſay, that three parts in four of the whole ſex are ſtark naught. He who dares be ſo hardy as to gain-ſay this argument, let him do it; for my part, I love to meddle with my match. It was a mercy that all the four women were not naught; for that had been maintaining that there was not one woman of quality honeſt. What has Virgil to anſwer for at this rate, in his Eneis? where, for two of the fair ſex that do good, *viz.* Venus and the Sybill, (for Cybelle and Andromache are but well-wiſhers) he has the following catalogue, who are always engaged in miſchief, *viz.* Juno, Juturna, Dido, her ſiſter, her nurſe, an old witch, Alecto the fury, all the Harpies; to theſe you are

* P. 12.

reminded of Helen the first incendiary, Sylvia is produced as a second, next Camilla, then Amata, who despised the decrees of the gods; nay, poor Creusa and Lavinia are made subservient to unfortunate events. This is Bossu's remark *, and he says that Virgil, in the characters of the sex, has closely observed the rule of Aristotle, who in his treatise of poetry has ventured to affirm, that there are more bad than good women in the world; and that they do more harm than good.

In an epic poem ladies of quality may be used as Aristotle pleases; but comedy was meant to compliment, and tickle, and flatter, and all that.

Here I take the first liberty to refer the reader to my first proposition. Mr Collier, † who talks with great intimacy of ancient and modern critics, and amongst others, makes familiar mention of Rapin, has unluckily overseen a particular remark that is made by that learned critic, on the improvement of modern comedy by Moliere, in his raising his ridiculous characters. If he does not know where to find it, I can help him to it.

Les anciens poetes comiques n'ont que des valets pour les plaisans de leur Theatre; et les plaisans du Theatre de Moliere, sont, les marquis et les gens de qualite : les autres n'ont joue dans la comedie, que la vie bourgeoise et commun, et Moliere a joute tout Paris et la Cour ‡.

Well, this may be the French, and it may be the English breeding; but Mr Collier assures me—— "This was "not the Roman breeding ‖." They used to compliment vice in quality; the gentle Persius gives us an instance of it.

"Vos O Patricius sanguis. quos vivere fas est,
"Occipite cæco, posticæ occurrite sannæ." *Sat.* 1.

But Persius was a man of quality, and perhaps might

* Traite du poem Epique. L. 4. Cap. 2.
† Vid. Col. P. 175.
‡ Rap. Reflex. sur la poet. 26. ‖ P. 12.

be a little familiar with his equals. As for Juvenal, he kept his distance, and made it as plain as the sun.

" Namque ibi fortunae veniam damus. Alea turpis,
" Turpe et adulterium mediocribus; haec eadem illi
" Omnia cum faciant, hilares nitidique vocantur."

Satire 11.

I am finely employed, to furnish my adversary with two such authorities against myself; but reflecting that Mr Collier has no great esteem for Juvenal, who he says, "writes " more like a pimp than a poet *," it is likely that he will return me his authority, to make the best use that I can of it for myself; therefore I will take the liberty to state a short question.

Juvenal, by the help of an irony, has in these three lines lashed the vices of great persons with more severity than he could have done by the means of a direct and point-blank invective. Mr Collier is †, in plain terms, for having compliments passed on persons of quality, and neither will allow their follies nor their vices to be exposed. Now the question that I would ask, is only, which agrees best with the character of a pimp, the satire of Juvenal, or the complaisance of Mr Collier? In the conclusion of his preface he is quite of another opinion; there "he confesses "he has no ceremony for debauchery, for to compliment " vice is but one remove from worshipping the devil." Now that Mr Collier compliments vice is plain. Ergo, *&c.*

This is his own confession, and so I leave him to lick himself with one of his own absolutions.

When vice shall be allowed as an indication of quality and good-breeding, then it may also pass for a piece of good-breeding to compliment vice in quality; but till then, I humbly conceive, that to expose and ridicule it, will altogether do as well.

" The *Double Dealer* (he says), runs riot" upon some oc-

* Page 71. † Page 12, 173, 175.

caſion or other, " and gives Lord Touchwood a mixture " of ſmut and pedantry to conclude with. *" For proof of this, he directs the reader in his margin to the 79th page, which is the laſt of the play. He has made no quotation, therefore I will do it for him, and tranſcribe what Lord Touchwood ſays in that place, being the concluding lines and moral of the whole comedy. Mellefont and Cynthia are to be married, the villainies of Maſkwell having been detected; Lord Touchwood gives them joy, and then concludes the play as follows.

" Lord *Touch.* —Be each other's comfort;—let me join " your hands—unwearied nights, and wiſhing days, at- " tend you both; mutual love, laſting health, and circling " joys tread round each happy year of your long lives.

" Let ſecret villainy from hence be warn'd;
" Howe'er in private, miſchiefs are conceiv'd,
" Torture and ſhame attend their open birth;
" Like vipers in the womb baſe treachery lyes,
" Still gnawing that whence firſt it did ariſe;
" No ſooner born but the vile parent dies."

This, in Mr Collier's polite phraſe, "is running riot " upon ſmut and pedantry." I hope this is ſome reaſon for my having laid down my third propoſition; where the reader is deſired not to rely upon Mr Collier's bare word, but to conſult the original, before he paſſes his cenſure on the Author.

Before he finiſhes his chapter of immodeſty, he taxes the *Mourning Bride* with ſmut and profaneneſs. If he can prove it, I muſt of neceſſity give up the cauſe. If there be immodeſty in that tragedy, I muſt confeſs myſelf incapable of ever writing any thing with modeſty or decency.

" Had Oſmyn (ſays he) parted with Almeria civilly, it " had been much better, that rant of ſmut and profane-

* Page 27.

" neſs might have been ſpared †." What he means by civilly know I not, unleſs he means dully and inſenſibly; neither civility nor incivility have any thing to do with paſſion. Where a ſcene is wrought to an exceſs of tenderneſs and grief, there is no room for either rudeneſs or complaiſance. Mr Collier is pleaſed to condemn the parting of Oſmyn and Almeria, by comparing it to the meeting of Menelaus and Helen; but I muſt take the liberty to tell him, that meeting and parting are two things, and eſpecially between two lovers. Now for the rant of ſmut and profaneneſs;

Oſm. " O my Almeria,
" What do the damn'd endure but to deſpair,
" But knowing Heav'n, to know it loſt for ever!"

I will not here ſo much as refer myſelf to my third propoſition, nor deſire the reader to trouble himſelf ſo far as to look on theſe lines in their proper ſcene and place, tho' moſt of the foregoing incidents in the poem were contrived ſo as to prepare the violence of this ſcene; and all the foregoing part of this ſcene was laid as a gradation of paſſion, to prepare the violence of theſe expreſſions, the laſt, and moſt extreme of the whole, in Oſmyn's part.

For once I will let theſe lines remain as they are ſet by Mr Collier, with his own filthy foil beneath, hemmed in and ſullied over with his own ſmut. And ſtill what is there either of profaneneſs or immodeſty in the expreſſion? Is not the reflection rather moral and religious than otherwiſe? Does not the alluſion ſet forth the terrors of damnation? I dare affirm that Mr Collier himſelf cannot ſo tranſpoſe thoſe words as to make them ſignify any thing either ſmutty or profane; what he may be able to do with the letters if they were diſjointed, I know not; I will not diſpute his ſkill in anagram; and if the truth were known I believe there lyes the ſtreſs of the proof. Well, Mr Say-

† Page 32, 33, 34.

grace, in the *Double Dealer*, is beholden to him for his new amuſement; for the future he ſhall renounce acroſtics and purſue anagrams.

As to what he ſays after, that theſe verſes are a ſimilitude drawn from the creed; I no more underſtand it, than he himſelf would believe it, though he ſhould affirm it.

In the reſt of his remarks upon this ſcene, his zeal gives way to his criticiſm. He had but an ill hold of profaneneſs, and was reduced to catch at the poetry. The corruption of a rotten divine is the generation of a four-critic.

He is very merry, and as he ſuppoſes with me, in laughing at waſting air. Waſting, he thinks, is a ſenſeleſs epithet for air. Truly I think ſo too. I will not loſe this occaſion of conſenting with him, becauſe he will not afford me any more; but where does he meet with waſting air? Not in the *Mourning Bride*, for in that play it is printed waſting air. So that all his aukward raillery about this word, reflects alone upon himſelf; to ſay nothing of his honeſty in making a falſe quotation, or of his becoming aſſurance in charging me with his own nonſenſe.

He proceeds in his unlucky and ſatirical ſtrain, and ridicules half a dozen epithets, and about as many figures, which follow in the ſame ſcene, with much delicacy of fine raillery, excellence of good manners, and elegancy of expreſſion.

Almeria, in the play, oppreſſed and ſinking beneath her grief, adapts her words to her poſture, and ſays to Oſmyn——

——"O let us not ſupport,
"But ſink each other lower yet, down, down,
"Where levell'd low, *&c.*"

"One would think (ſays Mr Collier), ſhe was learning "a ſpaniel to ſet."

Learning a ſpaniel to ſet! "Delectus verborum eſt origo

"eloquentiæ," is an aphorism of Julius Cæsar, and Mr Collier makes it plain. This poor man does not so much as understand even his own dog-language; when he says learning, I suppose he means teaching a critic to set, a dainty critic indeed!

A little before, Almeria is cold, faint and trembling in her agony, and says,

——"I chatter, shake and faint with thrilling fears."

"By the way, (says Mr Collier, for now he is Mr Collier emphatically) it is a mighty wonder to hear a woman "chatter! but there is no jesting, *&c.*"

Jesting, quotha! what, does he take the letting a pun to be the breaking of a jest? a whip and a bell, and away with him to kennel again immediately.

Ay, now he's in his element, as you shall hear.

"This litter of epithets makes the poem look like a "bitch overstocked with puppies, and sucks the scene al-"most to skin and bone." The comparison is handsome, I must needs say; but I desire the reader to consider that it is Mr Collier the critic, that talks at this odd rate; not Mr Collier the divine; I would not by any means, that he should mistake the one for the other.

If it is necessary for me to give any reason in this place, why I have used epithets and figures in this scene, I will do it in few words. First, I desire the reader to remove my verses from amongst Mr Collier's interlineations of sad drollery, and reinstate them in the scene of the play from whence they were torn. If there is found passion in those parts of the scene where those epithets and figures are used, they will stand in need of no vindication; for every body knows that discourses of men in passion naturally abound in epithets and figures, in aggravations and hyperboles. To this I add, that the diction of poetry consists of figures; by the frequent use of bold and daring figures, it is distinguished from prose and oratory. Epithets are beautiful in poetry, but make prose languishing and cold; and

the frequent uſe of them in proſe makes it pretend too much, and approach too near to poetry *. If figures and epithets are natural to paſſion and if they compoſe the diction of poetry, certainly tragedy, which is of the ſublime and firſt-rate poetry, and which ought every where to abound in paſſion, may very well be allowed to uſe epithets and figures, more eſpecially in a ſcene conſiſting entirely of paſſion, and ſtill more particularly in the moſt violent part of that ſcene. Thus much to juſtify the uſe and frequency of epithets and figures in the ſcene above-mentioned. Ay, but Mr Collier ſays, ſome of the figures there are ſtiff; he ſays ſo, I confeſs; but what then? Why, in anſwer, I ſay they are not, and ſo leave it to be determined by better judges.

Having ſhewn that men in paſſion naturally make uſe of violent figures and epithets; I will produce no leſs a man than Mr Collier himſelf for an example; if you would behold the gentleman beginning to ſwell, ſee him in page 80, there he puffs and blows, and deals mightily in ſhort periods; at firſt he is ſcarce able to breathe, but at length he opens, and anon finds vent for a very odd expreſſion. He is angry with ſome play or other, and ſays——"Nature "made the ferment and riſing of the blood, for ſuch occa-"ſions." I hope he ſpeaks figuratively, or elſe I am ſure he ſpeaks at leaſt profanely; for we know who is meant by "Nature in the language of Chriſtianity, and eſpecially "under the notion of a maker †."

He diſcovers in this expreſſion, that his religion and his natural philoſophy are both of a ſize. He has declared the very ſource of living, and the ſpring of motion in the mechanical part of man, to be no more than the fountain-head of follies and paſſions; and intimates very ſtrongly, that Nature made it only for that purpoſe.

But I think nothing that he ſays ſhould be conſidered ſeriouſly; therefore I will proceed, and produce Mr Collier as he ſtands advanced, both in ferment and figure.

* Ariſt. Rhet. l. 3. c. 3. † v. p. 72.

In p. 84. he has drawn quotations from comedies, "that "look reckingas it were from *Pandemonium*, and almoſt ſmell "of fire and brimſtone; eruptions of hell with a witneſs! he "almoſt wonders the ſmoak of them has not darkened the "ſun, and turned the air to plague and poiſon. Provoca-"tions enough to arm all nature in revenge; to exhauſt the "judgments of Heaven," *etc.* He goes on with ſuch terrible ſtuff for a conſiderable while together. I give this only as a ſample of ſome of this gentleman's figures.

Methinks I hear him pronounce them every time I behold them, they are almoſt noiſy and turbulent, even in the print. In ſhort, they are contagious; and I find he that will ſpeak of them is in great danger to ſpeak like them. But why does Mr Collier uſe all this vehemence in a written argument? If he were to preach, I grant it might be neceſſary for him to make a noiſe, that he might be ſure to be heard: but why all this paſſion upon paper? judgment is never outragious; and Chriſtianity is ever meek and mild.

I have read it ſomewhere as the remark of St Chryſoſtom, that the prophets of God were as much diſtinguiſhed from the prophets of the devil by their behaviour, as by the divine truths which they uttered. The former gave oracles with all mildneſs and temper; the other were ever bellowing with fury and madneſs; no wonder (ſays he) for the firſt were poſſeſſed with the Holy Ghoſt; and the laſt were poſſeſſed with the devil. So the reaſon is plain.

But I have employed too much time in digreſſing from my purpoſe, which is chiefly to vindicate myſelf; and only from caſual obſervation, to take notice of Mr Collier's errors, as they ſhall appear blazing up and down in thoſe pages where I am concerned, or others into which I may dip accidentally, in ſearching for expreſſions cited from my own plays.

I have done with him in his chapter of immodeſty. The reader has ſeen his charge againſt the *Mourning-Bride*, and is a judge of the juſtneſs and ſtrength of it. I con-

feſs I have not much to ſay in commendation of any thing that I have written: but if a fair-dealing man, or a candid critic had examined that tragedy, I fancy that neither the general moral contained in the two laſt lines, nor the ſeveral particular morals interwoven with the ſucceſs of every principal character, would have been overſeen by him.

The reward of matrimonial conſtancy in Almeria, of the ſame virtue, together with filial piety and love to his country, in Oſmin; the puniſhment of tyranny in Manuel, of ambition in Gonſalez, of violent paſſions, and unlawful love in Zara: theſe it may be were parts of the poem as worthy to be obſerved, as one or two erroneous expreſſions; and admit they were ſuch, might in ſome meaſure have attoned for them.

Mr Collier, in his ſecond chapter, charges the ſtage with profaneneſs. Almoſt all the quotations which he has made from my plays in this chapter are repreſented falſly, or by halves; ſo that I have very little to do in their vindication, but to repreſent them as they are in the original, fairly and at length; and to fill up the blanks which this worthy honeſt gentleman has left.

"In the *Old Batchelor* (ſays he) Vainlove aſks Bellmour, "Could you be content to go to heaven?*

Bell. "Hum, not immediately, in my conſcience not "heartily———

Here Mr Collier concludes this quotation with a daſh, as if both the ſenſe and the words of the whole ſentence were at an end. But the remainder of it in the play, Act 3. Scene 2. is in theſe words——"I would do a little "more good in my generation firſt, in order to deſerve it."

I think the meaning of the whole is very different from the meaning of the firſt half of this expreſſion. It is one thing for a man to ſay poſitively, he will not go to heaven; and another to ſay, that he does not think him-

* Coll. P. 64.

ſelf worthy, till he is better prepared. But Mr Collier undoubtedly was in the right, to take juſt as much as would ſerve his own turn. The ſtile of this expreſſion is light, and ſuitable to comedy, and the character of a wild debauchee of the town; but there is a moral meaning contained in it, when it is not repreſented by halves.

From Scene 3. of the 4th Act of the ſame comedy, he makes the following quotation. Fondlewife a jealous Puritan is obliged for ſome time to be abſent from his wife:

Fond. "Have you throughly conſidered how deteſtable, "how heinous, and how crying a ſin the ſin of adultery "is? Have you weighed it, I ſay? for it is a very weighty "ſin: and although it may lie———yet thy huſband muſt "alſo bear his part; for thy iniquity will fall upon his "head." Here is another daſh in this quotation, I refer the reader to the play to ſee what words Mr Collier has omitted; and from thence he may gueſs at the ſtrength of his imagination.

For this quotation, the reader ſees it in the ſame condition that Mr Collier thinks fit to ſhew it; his notes upon it are as follow.

"This fit of buffoonry and profaneneſs was to ſettle the "conſcience of young beginners, and to make the terrors of "religion inſignificant."

Indeed I cannot hold laughing, when I compare his dreadful comment with ſuch poor ſilly words as are in the text: eſpecially when I reflect how young a beginner, and how very much a boy I was when the comedy was written; which ſeveral know was ſome years before it was acted. When I wrote it I had little thoughts of the ſtage; but did it to amuſe myſelf in a ſlow recovery from a fit of ſickneſs. Afterwards through my indiſcretion it was ſeen; and in ſome little time more it was acted: and I, through the remainder of my indiſcretion, ſuffered myſelf to be drawn in, to the proſecution of a difficult and thankleſs ſtudy; and to be involved in a perpetual war

with knaves and fools. Which reflection makes me return to the subject in hand.

" Belmour desires Lætitia to give him leave to swear by " her eyes and her lips." Well, I am very glad Mr Collier has so much devotion for the lips and eyes of a pretty woman, that he thinks it profanation to swear by them. I will give him up this, if he pleases. To the next.

" He kisses the strumpet, and tells her——Eternity was " in that moment."

To say " eternity is in that moment," is neither profane nor sacred, nor good nor bad. With reverence of my friend the author be it spoken, I take it to be stark nonsense; and I had not car'd if Mr Collier had discover'd it.

Something or other he saw amiss in it, and writing a chapter of profaneness at that time, like little Bays, he pop'd it down for his own.

Lætitia, when her intrigue was like to be discovered, says of her lover,

" All my comfort lyes in his impudence, and, Heav'n
" be prais'd, he has a considerable portion."

This Mr Collier calls the " play-house grace." It is the expression of a wanton and a vicious character, in the distress and confusion of her guilt. She is discovered in her lewdness, and suffered to come no more upon the stage.

In the end of the last act Sharper says to Vainlove:

" I have been a kind of godfather to you yonder:
" I have promised and vowed some things in your name,
" which I think you are bound to perform."

I meant no ill by this allegory, nor do I perceive any in it now. Mr Collier says it was meant for drollery on the catechism; but he has a way of discovering drollery where it never was intended; and of intending drollery where it can never be discovered. So much for the *Old Batchelor*.

In the *Double Dealer* (he says) " Lady Plyant cries on " Jesu, and talks smut in the same sentence." That exclamation I give him up freely, I had myself long since con-

demned it, and resolved to strike it out in the next impression. I will not urge the folly, viciousness, or affectation, of the character to excuse it. Here I think myself obliged to make my acknowledgments for a letter, which I received after the publication of this play, relating to this very passage. It came from an old gentlewoman, and a widow, as she said, and very well to pass: it contained very good advice, and required an answer, but the direction for the superscription was forgot. If the good gentlewoman is yet in being, I desire her to receive my thanks for her good counsel, and for her approbation of all the comedy, that word alone excepted.

That Lady Plyant talks smut in the same sentence, lyes yet upon Mr Collier to prove. His bare assertion, without an instance, is not sufficient. If he can prove that there is downright smut in it, why even let him take it for his pains: I am willing to part with it.

His next objection is, that Sir Paul, who he observes bears the character of a fool, makes mention too often of the word Providence; for, says Mr Collier, "the meaning must be (by the way, that *must* is a little hard upon "me) that Providence is a ridiculous superstition; and "that none but blockheads pretend to religion *." What will it avail me in this place to signify my own meaning, when this modest gentleman says, I must mean quite contrary! I am civilier to him; I take his sense as he would have it understood; tho' his expression is exquisite nonsense; and I humbly conceive he may mean, that "a belief in Providence is a ridiculous superstition," when he says, that "Providence is a ridiculous superstition."

"Lady Froth is pleased to call Jehu a hackney coach-"man." *Ibid.*

Lady Froth's words are as follow——"Our Jehu was "a hackney-coachman when my Lord took him." Which is as much as to say, that the coachman's name is Jehu: and why might it not be Jehu as well as Jeremy, or Abra-

* P. 62.

ham, or Joseph, or any other Jewish or Christian name? Brisk desires that this may be put into a marginal note in Lady Froth's poem.

This, Mr Collier says, is meant to "burlesque the text, "and comment under one." What text, or what comment, or what other earthly thing, he can mean, I cannot possibly imagine. These remarks are very wise; therefore I shall not fool away any time about them.

Sir Paul tells his wife, "he finds passion coming upon "him by inspiration *."

The poor man is troubled with the *flatus*, his spleen is puff'd up with wind; and he is likely to grow very angry and peevish on the sudden; and desires the privilege to scold and give it vent. The word *inspiration*, when it has *divine* prefixed to it, bears a particular and known signification; but otherwise, to *inspire* is no more than to *breathe into*; and a man without profaneness may truly say, that a trumpet, a fife, or a flute, deliver a musical sound, by the help of inspiration. I refer the reader to my fourth proposition in this case. For a dispute about this word, would be very like the controversy in Ben Johnson's *Bartholomew Fair*, between the Rabbi and the Puppet; it is profane, and it is not profane, is all the argument the thing will admit of on either side.

"The *Double Dealer* is not yet exhausted." *Ibid.* That is, Mr Collier is not yet exhausted; for to give double interpretations to single expressions, with a design only to lay hold of the worst, is double-dealing in a great degree.

"Cynthia the top lady grows thoughtful" Cynthia, it seems, is the top lady now; not long since, the other three were the three biggest †. Perhaps the gentleman speaks as to personal proportion, Cynthia is the tallest, and the other three are the fattest of the four.

Well, "Cynthia is thoughtful, and upon the question "relates her contemplation."

* P. 64. † P. 12.

" *Cyn.* I am thinking, that tho' marriage makes man " and wife one flesh, it leaves them two fools."

Here he has filched out a little word so slily, it is hardly to be missed; and yet without it, the words bear a very different signification. The sentence in the play is printed thus: " Tho' marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves " them (still) two fools." Which by means of that little word *still*, signifies no more, than that if two people were fools before or when they were married, they would continue in all probability to be fools still, and after they were married. Ben Johnson is much bolder in the first scene of his *Bartholomew Fair*. There he makes Littlewit say to his wife——" Man and wife make one fool;" and yet I do not think he designed even that for a jest either upon Genesis ii. or St Matthew xix. I have said nothing comparable to that, and yet Mr Collier in his penetration has thought fit to accuse me of nothing less.

Thus I have summed up his evidence against the *Double Dealer*. I have not thought it worth while to cross-examine his witnesses very much, because they are generally silly enough to detect themselves.

In *Love for Love*, Scandal tells Mrs Foresight, he will " die a martyr rather than disclaim his passion *." The word *martyr* is here used metaphorically to imply perseverance. Martyr is a Greek word, and signifies, in plain English, no more than a witness. A holy martyr, or a martyr for religion, is one thing; a wicked martyr, or martyr for the devil, is another: a man may be a martyr, that is, witness to folly, to error, or impiety. Mr Collier is a martyr to scandal and falsehood quite through his book. " This expression, (he says) is dignifying adultery with the " style of martyrdom;" as if any word could dignify vice. These are very trifling cavils, and I think all of this kind may reasonably be referred to my fourth proposition.

* P. 74.

" Jeremy, who was bred at the univerſity, calls the na-
" tural inclinations to eating and drinking, whoreſon
" appetites *."

Jeremy bred at the univerſity! who told him ſo? What Jeremy does he mean, Jeremy Collier, or Jeremy Fetch? The laſt does not any where pretend to have been bred there. And if the other would but keep his own counſel, and not print M. A. on the title page of his book, he would be no more ſuſpected of ſuch an education than his name-ſake. Jeremy, in the play, banters the coxcomb Tattle, and tells him he has been at Cambridge: whereupon Tattle replies———

" It is well enough for a ſervant to be bred at an uni-
" verſity."

Which is ſaid to expoſe the impudence of illiterate fops, who ſpeak with contempt of learning and univerſities. For the word " whoreſon," I had it from Shakeſpeare and Johnſon, who have it very often in their low comedies; and ſometimes their characters of ſome rank uſe it. I have put it into the mouth of a footman. It is not worth ſpeaking of. But Mr Collier makes a terrible thing of it, and compares it to the " language of the Manicheans who made " the creation to be the work of the devil." After which he civilly ſolves all by ſaying, " the poet was Jeremy's " tutor, and ſo the myſtery is at an end." This, by a periphraſis, is calling me Manichean: well, let him call me what he pleaſes, he cannot call me Jeremy Collier.

His next quotation is of one line taken out of the middle of eight more in a ſpeech of Sir Sampſon in the ſecond act of this comedy: he repreſents it as an aphoriſm by itſelf, and without any regard to what either precedes or follows it. I deſire to be excuſed from tranſcribing the whole ſcene or ſpeech. I refer to my third propoſition, and deſire the reader to view it in its place. Mr Collier's citation is———" Nature has been provident only to bears " and ſpiders." I beg the reader to peruſe that ſcene,

* Ibid.

and then to look into the 139th Pſalm, becauſe Mr Collier ſays it is paraphraſed by me in this place. I wonder how ſuch remote wickedneſs can enter into a man's head. I dare affirm the ſcene has no more reſemblance of the Pſalm, than Mr Collier has of the character of a Chriſtian prieſt, which he gives us in page 127, 128, of his own book. Towards the end of the third act, Scandal has occaſion to flatter old Foreſight. He talks to him, and humours him in the cant of his own character, recites quotations in favour of aſtrology, and tells him the wiſeſt men have been beholden to that ſcience *———

"Solomon (ſays he) was wiſe, but how? By his judge-"ment in aſtrology." So ſays Pineda in his third book and eighth chapter. But the quotation of the authority is omitted by Mr Collier, either becauſe he would repreſent it as my own obſervation to ridicule the wiſdom of Solomon, or elſe becauſe he was indeed ignorant that it belonged to any body elſe.

The words which gave me the hint are, as above cited. *Pin. de rebus Salom.*

———"Illum judiciariam aſtrologiam calluiſſe circa "naturalia, circa inclinationes hominum, etc."

Does Mr Collier believe in prognoſtications from judicial aſtrology? does he think that Solomon had his wiſdom only from thence? If he does not, why will he not permit the ſuperſtitions growing from that ſcience to be expoſed? Why will he not underſtand that the expoſing them, in this place and manner, does not ridicule the wiſdom of Solomon, but the folly of Foreſight?

Scandal, he ſays, continues his banter, and ſays, "The "wiſe men of the Eaſt owed their inſtruction to a ſtar, "which is rightly obſerved by Gregory the great, in fa-"vour of aſtrology"

Scandal, indeed, banters Foreſight, but he does not banter the audience, in mentioning Gregory the Great: take his own words.

* P. 75.

" Deus accommodare ad eorum ſcientiam docuit, ut qui
" in ſtellarum obſervatione verſabantur ex ſtellis
" Chriſtum diſcerent."

The reſt of the banter is what Scandal relates from Albertus Magnus, who makes it the moſt " valuable ſcience, " becauſe it teaches us to conſider the cauſation of cauſes " in the cauſes of things."

I am but a bare tranſlator in this place: for example.

——" Nos habemus unam ſcientiam mathematicam,
" quæ docet nos in rerum cauſis cauſationem cauſa-
" rum conſiderare *."

Is not all this ſtuff, and fit to be expoſed? yet theſe, and ſome other like ſayings, have I ſometimes met with as authorities in vindication of judicial aſtrology.

In page 76. Mr Collier is very angry that Sir Sampſon has not another name; becauſe Sampſon is a name in the Old Teſtament.

He ſays, it is burleſquing the Sacred Hiſtory, for Sir Sampſon to boaſt of his ſtrength; becauſe Sampſon in the Old Teſtament is ſaid to be very ſtrong. The reſt that he quarrels at is a metaphorical expreſſion or two, of leſs conſideration if poſſible than any of his former cavils.

I refer the reader to the ſcene, which is the laſt in the play: and for an anſwer to what has before been ſaid on the word *martyr*. When I read in this page theſe words of Mr Collier—— " to draw towards an end of this play," I thought he had no more to ſay to it; but his method is ſo admirable, that he never knows where to begin, nor when to make an end. Five or ſix pages farther I find another of his remarks.

In *Love for Love*, Valentine ſays, " I am truth †."

If the reader pleaſes to conſult the fourth act of that comedy, he will there find a ſcene, wherein Valentine counterfeits madneſs.

One reaſon of his counterfeiting in that manner, is,

* Albert. Mag. Tom. 5. P. 659. † Coll. P. 83.

that it conduces somewhat to the design and end of the play. Another reason is, that it makes a variation of the character; and has the same effect in the dialogue of the play, as if a new character were introduced. A third use of this pretended madness is, that it gives liberty to satire, and authorises a bluntness, which would otherwise have been a breach in the manners of the character. Madmen have generally some one expression which they use more frequently than any other. Valentine, to prepare his satire, fixes on one which may give us to understand, that he will speak nothing but truth; and so before and after most of his observations says——"I am truth." For example; Foresight asks him,

——"What will be done at court?

Val. "Scandal will tell you——I am truth, I never "come there."

I had at first made him say, "I am Tom-tell-troth;" but the sound and meanness of the expression displeased me: and I altered it for one shorter, that might signify the same thing. What a charitable and Christian-like construction my dear friend Mr Collier has given to this expression, is fit only to be seen in his own book; and thither I refer the reader: I will only repeat his remark as it personally aims at me——"Now a poet, that had not been smitten "with the pleasure of blasphemy, would not have furnished "frenzy with inspiration, etc." Now I say, a priest, who was not himself furnished with frenzy instead of inspiration, would never have mistaken one for the other.

In his next chapter he charges the stage with the abuse of the clergy He quotes me so little in this chapter, and has so little reason even for that little, that it is hardly worth examining.

The *Old Batchelor* has a throw (as he calls it) at the dissenting ministers *.

Now his throw, in his own words, amounts to no more than that a pimp provides the habit of a dissenting mini-

* P. 101.

ſter, as the ſafeſt diſguiſe to conceal a whoremaſter; which is rather a compliment than an affront to the habit.

"Barnaby calls another of that character Mr Prig." Calls him Mr Prig? Why, what if his name were Mr Prig? Or what if he were not? This is furiouſly ſimple! "Fondle-"wife, to hook in the Church of England into the abuſe, "tacks a chaplain to the end of the deſcription."

How this pretty little reaſoner has (as he calls it) hooked-in the Church of England! Cannot a man be a chaplain unleſs he is of the Church of England?

Father Dominic the ſecond, he is for bringing in Heaven and the Church by hook or crook into his quarrel. If a Mufti had been tacked to the deſcription, he would have been equally offended; for Mufti, in the language of the theatre, he ſays, ſignifies Biſhop*.

Maſkwell in the *Double-Dealer*, has a plot, and is for engaging Saygrace in it†. He is for "inſtructing the Levite," and ſays, "without one of them have a finger in it, no "plot, public or private, can expect to proſper."

Perhaps there is a miſtake; many damnable plots have miſcarried, wherein prieſts have been concerned.

After this, he has tranſcribed a broken piece of a dialogue between Maſkwell and Saygrace, which I leave to ſhift for itſelf; having nothing in it worth an accuſation, or needing a defence.

Mr Collier is very florid in this chapter; but it is very hard to know what he would be at; he ſeems to be apprehenſive of being brought upon the ſtage, and in ſome places endeavours to prove, that as he is a prieſt, he ſhould be exempted from the correction of the Drama‡.

In other places he does not ſeem to be averſe to treading the ſtage; but he would do it in buſkins; he would be "all gold, purple, ſcarlet, and embroidery; and as rich as "nature, art, and rhetoric, can make him§."

* p. 103. † p. 102. ‡ p. 124. 127.
§ p. 118.

We will first enquire whether he may be brought on the stage or not; and then shew both how he would, and how he should, be represented; granting the representation of his character to be lawful.

Here he lays down something with the appearing face of an argument, under three heads, to shew that the clergy have a "right to regard and fair usage*." I am sure I will never dispute that with him in the general terms. But I suppose he is particular here; and means that they have a right to be exempted from the theatre. Whether they have or not I will not pretend to determine; this I know, that the custom of the theatre in all ages and countries is against this opinion; which in this chapter is sufficiently proved by the examples which himself has produced.

If Mr Collier is in earnest of that opinion, he has behaved himself either very treacherously or very weakly, in offering to assert it by a false and sophistical argument. His proof begins.

1. Because of their relation to the Deity.

"Now (says he) the credit of the service always rises in "proportion to the quality and greatness of the master." Upon this position he builds all the argument under this first head. The position is sophistical, and his inferences consequently false. The trick lyes here. It being granted him that the credit of the Service rises in proportion, *etc.* he slily infers, that the credit of the Servant also rises in proportion to the credit of the service; which is false: for every body knows that an ill servant both discredits his service, and is discredited by it. And by how much the more honourable the service is in which he is employed, so much the more is he accounted an ill man who behaves himself unworthily in that service.

If an offending servant is punished by the law, the honour of the service is not by that means violated; so far from that, that it is rather vindicated: neither on the stage is the divine service ridiculed, only the ridiculous servant is exposed.

* p. 127.

2. Becauſe of the importance of their office. And,

3. They have preſcription for their privilege, their function has been in poſſeſſion of eſteem in all ages and countries.

Theſe two are but branches of the firſt head; for "their "relation to the Deity implies the importance of their "office:" and beſpeaks that privilege and eſteem which ever ought to be paid to their holy function.

But here again Mr Collier confounds the function with the perſon, the ſervice with the ſervant: he is father Dominic ſtill.

I would aſk Mr Collier, whether a man, after he has received holy orders, is become incapable of either playing the knave, or the fool?

If he is not incapable, it is poſſible that ſome time or other his capacity may exert itſelf to action.

If he is found to play the knave, he is ſubject to the penalties of the law, equally with the lay-man; if he play the fool, he is equally, with a lay-fool, the ſubject of laughter and contempt.

By this behaviour the *man* becomes alienated from the *prieſt*; as ſuch actions are in their own nature ſeparate and very far removed from his function; and when ſuch a one is brought on the ſtage, the folly is expoſed, not the function; the *man* is ridiculed, and not the *prieſt*.

Such a character neither does nor can aſperſe the ſacred order of prieſthood, neither does it at all reflect upon the perſons of the pious and good clergy: for as Ben. Johnſon obſerves on the ſame occaſion from St Hierome, "Ubi "generalis eſt de vitiis diſputatio, ibi nullius eſſe perſonae "injuriam:" where the buſineſs is to expoſe and reprehend folly and vice in general, no particular perſon ought to take offence. And ſuch buſineſs is properly the buſineſs of comedy.

That this may not look like a ſophiſtical diſtinction in me, to ſay that the *man* does, by his behaviour, as it were, alienate himſelf from the *prieſt*, and become liable to an

ill character, apart from his office; I desire it may be observed that the church itself makes the same distinction.

It was foreseen by the reverend bishops and clergy of this realm, in their convocations for establishing the thirty-nine articles of our religion in the year 1562, and 1604, that evil men (unperceived to be such) might creep into the ministry of the church. That afterwards they might become openly profligate, and notoriously scandalous in their lives and conversation; even to that degree, that some scrupulous Christians, and of a very tender conscience, might probably take such offence at the unworthiness of their minister, as dangerously to avoid his administration of the holy word and sacraments; to refrain from public worship, and to lose the real benefit of the communion, through a misconceived opinion of the invalidity of it when administered by unclean and wicked hands.

They might (and not without some reasonable grounds) doubt, whether the same man, who was personally impious, could be spiritually sacred; whether he, who by his example would seduce them to the devil, could by his precepts be conducing to their salvation. This, I say, they might doubt; and not without some reasonable grounds; and not without the opinions of two of the fathers, *viz.* St Cyprian and St Origen, to authorize their distrust.

But to remove this doubt, and to invalidate the authorities of those fathers, the six-and-twentieth article of religion was thus established by the convocations above-mentioned.

ARTICLE XXVI.

"Although in the visible church the evil be ever mingled "with the good, and sometime the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments: "yet for as much as they do not the same in their own "name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission "and authority, we may use their ministry both in hearing the word of God, and in receiving the sacraments. "Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away

" by their wickedneſs, nor the grace of God's gifts diminiſhed from ſuch, as by faith, and rightly do receive " the ſacraments miniſtered unto them, which are effectual, becauſe of Chriſt's inſtitution and promiſe, altho' they be miniſtred by evil men.

" Nevertheleſs it appertaineth to the diſcipline of the " church, that enquiry be made of evil miniſters: and " that they be accuſed by thoſe that have knowledge of " their offences; and, finally being found guilty, by juſt " judgment be depoſed."

Here is a moſt manifeſt diſtinction made between the man and the prieſt; between the regard to his perſon, and the reſpect to his function.

I will ſhew anon, that Mr Collier himſelf has made this very diſtinction, when he is pleaſed to approve of the characters of Joida and Mathan in the Athaliah of Racine.

If any man has in any play expoſed a prieſt, as a prieſt, and with an intimation, that as ſuch, his character is ridiculous, I will agree heartily to condemn both the play and the author. I am confident no man can defend ſuch an impiety: and whoever is guilty of it, my advice to him is, that he acknowledge his error, that he repent of it and ſin no more.

I confeſs I do not remember any ſuch character. Mr Collier, who is more converſant with bad plays than any man that I know, perhaps may.

Mr Collier in this chapter produces many inſtances of the characters of prieſts in the poems of heathen writers; he is extremely delighted with the diſtinctions of their habits, with the ſhow and ſplendour in which they appeared. The crown and gilt ſceptre of Chryſeis, with the valuable ranſom which he had in his power, are objects that gratify his vain imagination extremely. He is indeed ſo rapt with his ſplendid ideas of Chryſeis, Laocoon, and Chloreus, that to uſe his own phraſe, he *runs riot* upon their deſcription from page 112 to 118. He ſeems to have quite laid aſide the thoughts of the " twelve poor men

"who over-bore all the oppoſition of power and learning," in page 81.

He now talks of nothing but great families, great places, wealthy and honourable marriages, fine clothes, and in ſhort, of all the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. To give him his due, as in ſome places of his book he criticizes more like a pedant than a ſcholar, argues more like a ſophiſter than a right reaſoner, and rallies more like a waterman than a gentleman; ſo in this place he talks more like a herald-painter than a prieſt, and inſiſts more upon pedigrees and coats of arms, than on moral virtues, or a generous education.

He tells us the Jewiſh and Egyptian prieſts, the Perſian Magi, and Druids of Gaul, were all at the "upper-end "of the government," p. 131. What then? What is that to us, any more than if they were uſed to ſit at the upper-end of the table? No doubt this gentleman's affection for ſuch a ſeat furniſhed him with this florid and metaphorical expreſſion.

In p. 132. he ſays, "the prieſthood was for ſome time "confined to the Patrician order." Very well: we know the reaſon of that; but, with ſubmiſſion, that is not the ſame thing as if the Patrician order had been confined to the prieſthood. However, this gentleman's meaning is plain: certainly if he were Pope, he would renounce the title of "ſervus ſervorum Dei."

He quotes Tully for his approbation of the ſame perſon's being ſet at the head both of religion and government *. What does he mean by this? What occaſion is there of this quotation in our country? Is not our king both at the head of our religion and government? When Mr Collier allows him one, perhaps he will not deny him the other.

But to come to his meaning (if he has any) through all this vain ſtuff. I take it, he would give us to underſtand, that in all ages the function of a prieſt was held to be a

* Page 133.

very honourable function. Did Mr Collier ever meet with any body fool enough to engage him to assert that?

He tells us the men of the first quality, nay, kings and emperors, have been employed in the sacred ministry: and I can tell him that kings and emperors have been in all ages exposed on the stage; their ambition, tyrannies and cruelties. All the follies and vices which were consequences of their arbitrary power and ungoverned appetites, have been laid open to the people's view. They have been punished, deposed, and put to death on the stage; yet never any king complained of the theatre, or the poets. On the contrary, all great princes have cherished and supported them so long as they themselves were great; till they have diminished in their own characters, and turned to bigotry and enthusiasm; and of this a living instance might be given.

Yet, *1st*, Kings have a relation to the Deity.

They are his deputies and vicegerents on earth.

2dly, They are possessed of a very important office. And,

3dly, Their function has been in possession of esteem in all ages and countries.

That men of quality have always been, and are now employed in the sacred ministry, is evidently true; and I could heartily wish that more were still employed in it: so should the most honourable office be executed by the most honourable hands. So should we behold men of birth, title and heraldry, despising tinsel shew, pageantry, and all Mr Collier's beloved bells, bawbles, and trinkets; and preferring decency, humility, charity, and other Christian virtues to shining ornaments; or even the "upper-"end of the government." How ill such temporal pride agrees with the person and character of a truly pious and exemplary divine, I will not pretend to determine. I will only transcribe the words of a learned and honoured mini-

ſter of the church, to this purpoſe; and that is the reverend Mr Hales of Eaton *.

" For we have believed him that hath told us, That in " Jeſus Chriſt there is neither high nor low; and that in " giving honour, every man ſhould be ready to prefer an- " other before himſelf; which ſayings cut off all claim " moſt certainly to ſuperiority, by title of Chriſtianity, ex- " cept men can think that thoſe things were ſpoken only " to poor and private men. Nature and religion agree in " this, that neither of them hath a hand in this heraldry " of *ſecundum ſub et ſupra*; all this comes from compoſition " and agreement of men among themſelves. Wherefore " this abuſe of Chriſtianity, to make it lacquey to ambition, " is a vice for which I have no extraordinary name of ig- " nominy, and an ordinary I will not give it, leſt you " ſhould take ſo tranſcendent a vice to be but trivial."

Here is not one ſyllable of " heraldry regulated by" garter, " and blazoned by" ſtones †. I would deſire the reader, immediately after this paragraph from Mr Hales, to conſult Mr Collier in p. 136, and to obſerve how he ſtickles for place, and thruſts himſelf before the gentleman.

" The addition of clerk is at leaſt equal to that of gentle- " man." How ſnappiſh and ſhort his clerkſhip is in his periods! mark him, " were it otherwiſe, the profeſſion " would in many caſes be a kind of puniſhment." Good Heaven! to profeſs the ſervice of God would be a puniſhment, if the title of clerk were not at leaſt equal to that of gentleman. Well,—" The heraldry is every jot as ſafe " in the church as it was in the ſtate. When the laity are " taken leave of, not gentleman but clerk is uſually writ- " ten." And, a little after, " The firſt addition is not " loſt but covered." Good reader, return to Mr Hales, that you may be reminded of the true reſpect and veneration that is due to his memory; and to the reſt of the meek, the modeſt, and the humble miniſters of the church:

* Vid. his Tract concerning Schiſm. p. 224, 225.
† Coll. p. 135.

for while Mr Collier is before you, you will be very apt to forget it.

I know many reverend clergymen now living, whose names I cannot hear without awe and reverence: and why is that? Not from their heraldry, but their humility, their humanity, their exceeding learning, which is yet exceeded by their modesty; their exemplary behaviour in their whole lives and conversations; their charitable censures of youthful errors and negligence, their fatherly and tender admonitions, accompanied with all sweetness of behaviour; and full of mild, yet forcible persuasion.

He were next to a Manichean that would not hold such mens persons in a degree of veneration, next to their profession. But a Mr Prig, a Mr Smirk, and, I am afraid, a Mr Collier, are names implying characters worthy of aversion and contempt.

Now let us take a view of Mr Collier as he appears upon him as one who has eloped from his pulpit and strayed within the inclosures of the theatre; and I do not see why the players should not lay hold of him, and pound him till he has given them absolution. Why does he abandon his gown and cassoc to come capering and frisking, in his lay-doublet and drawers, behind the scenes? Is he master of the revels? Is the stage under his discipline? "And is "he fit to correct the theatre who is not fit to come into "it *?" He is not fit to come into it. First, because his office requires him to another place. And, secondly, because he makes naughty of innocent plays, and writes baudy and blasphemous comments on the poets works.

Well, he has at length discovered a play which is "an "exception to what he has observed, in France," (Coll. 124.) The play is the *Athelia* of Racine. In this play are the characters of two priests, Joida and Mathan; of both which Mr Collier is pleased to admit. By enquiring into his reasons for licensing this play, we shall see in what man-

* v. Coll. p. 139.

ner he will allow a prieſt to be repreſented on the ſtage; and from thence we may gueſs how he himſelf would be contented to appear there alſo.

"Joida," ſays he, "the high-prieſt, has a large part, but "the poet does him juſtice in his ſtation; he makes him "honeſt and brave, and gives him a ſhining character "throughout." That is well. "Mathan is another prieſt "in the ſame tragedy, he turns renegado, and revolts from "God to Baal." That is not altogether ſo well. But has not the poet done him juſtice too, in giving him the character that belonged to him? Whether he has or not, Mr Collier thinks he has made him ample reparation and more than amends, as you ſhall ſee. He goes on. "He is a very "ill man; but"——ay, now for the *but*.—He has turned renegado, has revolted to God from Baal, is poſitively a very ill-man. But, what? O, but "he makes a conſiderable "appearance." There, now it is out, and all is well. If he has but "a gilt crown and ſcepter, ſcarlet and embroidery in "abundance," let him rebel or revolt, he makes a good figure, and it becomes him very well. Your ſervant, Mr Racine, it was well for you that Baal gave good benefices, and his prieſts could afford to make a conſiderable appearance, or Mathan's revolt had not been ſo well taken at your hands. But hold, Mr Collier goes on.

I am afraid the reputation enlarges, and the compliment riſes. For the ſake of connection let us repeat.——

——"But makes a conſiderable appearance." And,—

Ay, now, what can follow this And, in the name of climax?

You ſhall ſee.——"And is one of the top of Athalia's "faction."

Nay, then there is no more to be ſaid. If he had fine cloaths, and was ſet at the top, or rather at the upper end of a faction too, he had his heart's content: a reaſonable Mathan would have been ſatisfied with any one of thoſe bleſſings. Though I would not anſwer for Mr Collier's continence, at this time eſpecially; he is ſo tranſported

with Mr Racine's bounty to Mathan, that he excuſes him frankly for ſhewing him a renegado.

He goes on.——" As for the blemiſhes of his life, " they ſtick all upon his own honour, and reach no farther " than his perſon."

I think I have now kept the promiſe that I made not long ſince, to ſhew that Mr Collier himſelf, when he is in the humour, will allow of the diſtinction betwixt the man and the prieſt, the perſon and the function.

But to ſhew that I can be as croſs as he; now when he would admit of this diſtinction, I ſhould rather ſay when he alledges, it ſhall not by any means be granted him. Here is a renegade prieſt, that revolts from the true God to Baal; and this man is only branded with a blemiſh on his perſon. What, is it no affront to his function then? I take it to be no excuſe for him that he ſhould afterwards become a prieſt of Baal. Sure Mr Collier does not mean to make uſe of Mr Dryden's key, as he calls it, and ſay, that " prieſts of all religions," &c. Well, it is only a blemiſh upon his perſon; or, if Mr Collier pleaſes, becauſe he delights in phraſes of heraldry, it is only a blot in his eſcutcheon. Let Mr Collier anſwer for this, to thoſe who have authority to examine him further. He is in every line growing more and more gracious to Mr Racine. And now he is come to the very top or upper-end of his civility; and ſays with a bon grace and belle air, that ——" in fine, the play is a very religious poem "

Indeed! why then " in fine," we are tacked about; then, a play, " in fine," may be a religious poem, it ſeems: why then Sir Martin with his, " in fine," here has quite unraveled his own plot. Ay, ay, the play is a very religious poem; if faction and fine cloaths will not make a religious poem, it muſt be made of ſtrange ſtuff indeed.

——" It is upon the matter all ſermon and anthem"——

O Lord! nay, now I proteſt, Mr Collier, this muſt not be; nay, now you are ſo infinitely obliging! fye, this is

too much on the other ſide : you quite forget the fathers indeed, Sir, and the biſhop of Arras.

——" And if it were not deſigned for the theatre"——
Out with it, man.——" I have nothing to object."

Why, that is well, now he has come to himſelf. On my word, I was half afraid he would have played the Mathan, and have revolted to the theatre. The miſchief is, this naughty theatre will be interloping; when ſermon and anthem become the ſtage as ill as faction and fine cloaths do the pulpit: but men ſometimes travel into foreign countries for variety.

I cannot forbear enquiring into one example more, which this gentleman offers in the very next page.

" In the hiſtory of Sir John Oldcaſtle, Sir John, parſon of
" Wrotham, ſwears, games, wenches, pads, tilts and
" drinks; this is extremely bad."

Extremely bad? Can any thing be worſe? and yet, ſays he, " Shakeſpear's Sir John has ſome advantage in his " character." Now who can forbear enquiring what advantage a character can poſſibly have conſiſtent with ſuch abominable vices? Firſt, " He appears loyal and ſtout; " he brings in Sir John Acton, and other rebels, priſoners." So! as it is in the *Spaniſh Friar*, a manifeſt member of the church militant! that he was ſtout, was plain before, from his padding and tilting. But this will not do; the advantage does not yet appear. No! why then,

——" He is rewarded by the King, and the judge uſes him
" civilly and with reſpect."

This advantage appears ſtill but coldly. Kings reward ſpies and executioners, and neceſſary inſtruments of policy and puniſhment. And judges are generally men of years, temper and wiſdom, and uſe all gentlemen with civility. Ay, ſay you ſo? why then——" in ſhort"——ay, now for the Iliads in a nut-ſhell. Here is the *but* coming again, I had a glimpſe of him juſt now, *ex gr.* " In ſhort, he is " repreſented lewd, but not little."

There is an advantage for you now; " in ſhort, lewd, " but not little."

Conciſe and pretty! the gentleman had beſt take it for a motto, and have it annexed to his coat-armour, when he can get "his heraldry regulated by garter, and blazon-"ed by ſtones."

Well, I confeſs I have been in an error; I thought a man never appeared ſo very little, as when he appeared extremely lewd. If I have undervalued lewdneſs, I aſk Mr Collier's pardon.

"And the diſgrace falls rather on the perſons than the "office."

Here again, you ſee he will allow this diſtinction to all his favourites. Here is the perſon and the function ſeparated again; the prieſt and the man: in ſhort, he anſwers himſelf ſo often, that I will diſpute this point no more with him.

But you may ſee what this poor gentleman, in the wretched pride of his little heart, thinks a ſufficient alloy to make current a moſt diſſolute or impious character. Though you expoſe a prieſt revolted from God to Baal, yet, if you let him make a conſiderable figure, and place him at the head of a faction, all is well enough; and the poem may be a "religious poem," &c. Shew another in comedy, let him ſwear, game, wench, pad, tilt and drink, but withal let him keep good company; let a judge, or ſome great man treat him with reſpect, that he may not appear little, though he appear lewd, and you give "ſome "advantage to his character;" at leaſt you will ſhew that he "underſtands his poſt, and converſes with the freedom "of a gentleman *."

In page 122, our author has obſerved "how the hea-"then poets behaved themſelves in the argument. Prieſts "ſeldom appear in their plays; and when they come, it "is buſineſs of credit that brings them. They are treated "like perſons of condition; they act up to their relation, "neither ſneak, nor prevaricate, nor do any thing unbe-"coming their office."

Indeed when men neither ſneak nor prevaricate, nor do any thing unbecoming their office in the world, they ought

* Ibid.

not to be represented otherwise on the stage: nay, they ought not to be exposed at all in comedy; for the characters exposed there, should be of those only who misbehave themselves.

Let us suppose that the character of this author were to be shewn upon the stage; he who should represent him behaving himself as he ought, would be to blame, and that for these reasons.

First, To represent him behaving himself as he ought, would be to represent him in the discharge of some part of his holy office, which is fit by no means to be shewn on the stage; especially in comedy, where men's vices and follies are exposed; that would be to bring Mr Collier's function, not his person, on the stage, which is not to be permitted.

Secondly, He that should represent Mr Collier behaving himself as he ought, would very much misrepresent Mr Collier, in respect to the manner of his character.

Let us take a slight sketch of him as he presents himself to us in his book. Let Mr Collier be represented as he is, not as he ought to be; that by seeing what he is, Mr Collier may be ashamed of what he is, and endeavour at what he ought to be.

And that the instruction of the representation may not be lost, let us borrow that distinction which severes the priest from the man; if Mathan, and sir John of Wrotham have done with it, they may lend it to us; it is for the use of an humble servant of theirs, and whenever the humour takes them to revolt, pad, tilt, wench, drink, and soforth, let them give us a quarter of an hour's notice, and they shall have it again.

Well, our author being thus divided, we will desire the better part of him to take his place in the pit, and let the other appear to him like his evil genius on the stage.

Suppose the gentleman in the scene to appear very intent upon the very obscene comedies of Aristophanes; Quære,* Whether the person in the pit, beholding how

* Coll. p. 40, 44.

very ill this becomes him, will not think that he might with much more decency, betake himself to his septuagint?

Mr Collier on the stage shall anathematise the poets, and tell them in plain terms, they shall be excommunicated, and that "they are not fit to come into the "Church *." Quære, Whether Mr Collier in the pit, will not think it had been more becoming his character, to have invited and exhorted them to it?

Mr Collier on the stage shall behave himself with all the arrogance, and little pride of a spruce pedant, that the gentleman in the pit may be induced to practise the meekness and humility of a Christian divine †. The former shall pervert and misconstrue every thing that is said to him, that the latter may learn to use justice, candour, and sincerity, in his interpretations ‡.

The player Collier shall call the gentlemen that he converses with, foot-pads, buffoons, slaves, &c. that the spectator Collier may remember they are Christians, and should be catechised by other names §.

Mr Collier, on the stage, shall rake baudry and obscenity out of modest and innocent expressions; and having extorted it, he shall scourge it, not out of chastisement but wantonness; he shall forget, "that sometimes to report a "fault is to repeat it **." The spectator in the pit shall plainly perceive, that he loves to look on naked obscenity; and that he only flogs it, as a sinful pedagogue sometimes lashes a pretty boy, that looks lovely in his eyes, for reasons best known to himself ††.

"Castigo te non quod odio habeam sed quod amem."

Mr Collier, on the stage, shall ridicule, rail at, and condemn all plays whatsoever; he shall tire himself, and his audience, with his inveteracy and exclamations against them. Which done, he shall all on a sudden, and, that

* Coll. 139. † Page 136. ‡ V. most part of Mr Collier's quotations. § V. Pref. 81, 63, 175. ** page 71.
†† Coll ch. 1, 2.

there may be something surprising, and "præter expecta-"tum" in his character, from a persecutor, become a promoter of the drama; he shall be as furious a critic as he is a bigot; and give the best rules and instructions of which he is capable for the composure of comedy. He shall talk in all the pedantical cant of fable, intrigue, discovery, of unities of time, place, and action *. But lest this behaviour in Mr Collier's character should appear inconsistent, and a violation of the precept of Horace,

——"Servetur ad imum,
"Qualis ab incepto processerit; et sibi constet."

His vanity shall bear proportion with his dissimulation; his ignorance shall be as great as his malice; and he shall not be able to deviate from his inveterate zeal against plays; for he shall not appear to understand one syllable of the rules of writing, but shall mislead poetry as much by his instructions, as he has perverted it by his interpretations; he shall favour his adversaries without obliging them; the zeal of his character shall be preserved even in his own despite; and his devotion, in this particular, shall be the child of his ignorance; for he can make but

——"Lame mischief though he mean it well †"

And if plays are pernicious, Mr Collier shall only be wicked in his wishes, he shall be acquitted in his performances; his instigations to poetry shall prove checks upon it. He shall appear mounted upon a false Pegasus, like a Lancashire witch upon an imaginary horse, the phantom shall be unbridled, and a broomstick made visible ‡.

At this catastrophe, Mr Collier, in the pit, shall exclaim like Flecknoe, and with very little variation;

"O why didst thou on learning fix a brand,
"And rail at arts thou didst not understand?"

Now, lest the poet who shall undertake this character,

* V. from p. 206, to 228, and forwards. † P. 204. ‡ P. 230.

ſhould be gravelled in the imitation of the ſtyle of this elaborate writer, let him take theſe few inſtances of his alluſive and highly metaphorical expreſſions, for patterns; *viz.* "running riot upon ſmut; a poem with a litter of epi- "thets, like a bitch overſtocked with puppies; ſucking "the ſenſe to ſkin and bone; a fancy ſlip-ſtocking high; "the upper end of a government; a whole kennel of beaux "after a woman," *&c.* For his elegancy, theſe are originals; "learning a ſpaniel to ſet: this belike is the mean- "ing: three of the biggeſt of four: big alliances: men of "the biggeſt conſideration for ſenſe, *&c.* to marry up a top- "lady:" cum multis aliis *.

It is a ſtrange thing that a man ſhould write ſuch ſtuff as this, who is capable of making the following obſervation.

"Offenſive language, like offenſive ſmells, does but make "a man's ſenſes a burden, and affords him nothing but "loathing and averſion †."

"For theſe reaſons it is a maxim in good-breeding ne- "ver to ſhock the ſenſes or imagination ‡."

Indeed there are few things which diſtinguiſh the manner of a man's breeding and converſation, more viſibly than the metaphors which he uſes in writing; I mean, in writing from himſelf, and in his own name and character. A metaphor is a ſimilitude in a word, a ſhort compariſon; and is uſed as a ſimilitude, to illuſtrate and explain the meaning. The variety of ideas in the mind furniſh it with variety of matter for ſimilitudes; and thoſe ideas are only ſo many impreſſions made on the memory, by the force and frequency of external objects.

Pitiful and mean compariſons proceed from pitiful and mean ideas; and ſuch ideas have their beginning from a familiarity with ſuch objects. From this author's poor and filthy metaphors and ſimilitudes, we may learn the filthineſs of his imagination; and from the uncleanneſs of that, we may make a reaſonable gueſs at his rate of edu-

* See p. 12, 27, 34, 92, 131, 132, 225, 233, &c. † Coll. 205. ‡ Ibid.

cation, and thoſe objects with which he has been moſt converſant and familiar.

To conclude with him in this chapter, I will only ſay that no man living has a greater reſpect for a good clergyman, nor more contempt for an ill one, than myſelf; the former I have often been proud to ſhew, the latter never fell in my way till now. I never yet introduced the character of a clergyman in any of my plays, excepting that little apparition of Saygrace, in the *Double Dealer*; and I am very indifferent whether ever the gown appear upon the ſtage or not; if it does, I think it ſhould not be worn by the character of a good man; for ſuch a one ought not to be made the companion of fooliſh characters. If ever it is ſhewn there, it ought to be hung looſely on the ſhoulders of ſuch a one as I have lately inſtanced; but to no other end, than to demonſtrate that even the ſacred habit is abuſed by ſome; that by their characters and manners the audience may obſerve what manner of men they are. And no queſtion but if our author in the pit, did behold his counterpart on the ſtage, thus egregiouſly to play the fool in his pontificalibus, "the rebuke would "ſtrike ſtronger upon his ſenſe," and prove more effectual to his reformation *.

I come now to his chapter of the immorality of the ſtage.

His objections here are rather objections againſt comedy in general, than againſt mine, or any body's comedies in particular. He ſays the ſparks that "marry up the top "ladies †," and are rewarded with wives and fortunes in the laſt acts, are generally debauched characters. In anſwer to this, I refer to my firſt and ſecond propoſition. He is a little particular in his remarks upon Valentine, in *Love for Love*. He ſays,

"This ſpark, the poet would paſs for a perſon of virtue; "but he ſpeaks too late ‡."

I know who, and what he is, that always ſpeaks too

* Coll. 111. † P. 152. ‡ Ibid.

soon. Why is he to be passed for a person of virtue? or where is it said that his character makes extraordinary pretensions to it? Valentine is in debt, and in love; he has honesty enough to close with a hard bargain, rather than not pay his debts, in the first act; and he has generosity and sincerity enough, in the last act, to sacrifice every thing to his love; and when he is in danger of losing his mistress, thinks every thing else of little worth. This, I hope, may be allowed a reason for the lady to say "he has "virtues?" they are such in respect to her; and her once saying so, in the last act, is all the notice that is taken of his virtue quite through the play.

Mr Collier says he is prodigal. He was prodigal, and is shewn in the first act under hard circumstances, which are the effects of his prodigality. That he is unnatural and undutiful, I do not understand: he has indeed a very unnatural father; and if he does not very passively submit to his tyranny and barbarous usage, I conceive there is a moral to be applied from thence to such fathers. That he is profane and obscene, is a false accusation, and without any evidence. In short, the character is a mixed character; his faults are fewer than his good qualities; and as the world goes, he may pass well enough for the best character in a comedy: where even the best must be shewn to have faults, that the best spectators may be warned not to think too well of themselves.

He quotes the *Old Bachelor* twice in this chapter *. His first quotation is made with his usual assurance and fair-dealing.

"If any one would understand what the curse of all ten-"der-hearted women is, Bellmour will inform him. What "is it then? It is the pox."

Here he makes a flourish upon ill-nature's being recommended as a guard of virtue and of health, *&c.*

The whole matter of fact is no more than this:

Lucy to Bellmour, Act V. Scene ii.

* Page 171, 172.

"If you do deceive me, the curse of all kind tender-"hearted women light upon you.

"*Bell.* That is as much as to say, the pox take me."

It is his interpretation; and it is agreeable to his character. He is a debauchee, and he thinks there is but one way for a woman to be kind and tender-hearted; and I think his threatening them with such a curse as the consequence of so much easiness, does not seem to recommend the vice at all, but rather to forbid it: his very lewdness, in this place, is made moral and instructive.

I am very glad our author is in such circumstances, in this chapter, that he can bear the sight of that hellish monosyllable, pox; and prevail with himself to write it at its full length. Non ita pridem. In page 82 he loves his love with a p—— but no naming: that is not like a cavalier. What ermine was ever an instance of superfine nicety comparable to Mr Collier? I will not say, what cat? though if I should, I can quote a Spanish proverb to justify the comparison.

"El gato scaldado tiene miedo de agua fria.

He makes one quotation more *, to what purpose indeed I know not; but I will repeat it, in justice to him, because it is the last that he has made, and the first fair one.

Old Bachelor, Act IV. Belinda to Sharp.

"—Where did you get this excellent talent of railing?

"*Sharp.* ——Madam, the talent was born with me.—I "confess I have taken care to improve it, to qualify me "for the society of ladies."

These are the words just as the gentleman quotes them, but why, or wherefore, he is not pleased to discover; for he says not one syllable for nor against them; I suppose he thinks the proof plain, and the evidence firm without a corroborator.

I hope the reader will not forget, that these instances are produced, to prove that I have encouraged immorality in my plays. I thought the expression above-mentioned,

* P. 172

had been a gentle reproof to the ladies that are addicted to railing; and since Mr Collier has not said that it must mean the contrary, I do not see why it may not be understood so still.

I have now gone through with all Mr Collier's quotations; I have been as short as I could possibly in their vindication; I have avoided all recriminations, and have not so much as made one citation from any of my plays in favour of them; whatever they contain of morality or invective against folly and vice, is no more than what ought to be in them; therefore I do not urge it as a merit.

My business was not to paint, but to wash; not to shew beauties, but to wipe off stains.

Mr Collier has indeed given me an opportunity of reforming many errors, by obliging me to a review of my own plays.

" Dum relego scripsisse pudet, quia plurima cerno
" Me quoque qui feci, judice, digna lini."

But I must affirm, that they are only errors occasioned by inadvertency or inexperience, and that I am conscious of nothing that can make me liable to his censure, or rather slander. I am as ready to own the advantages I have received from his book, as to demonstrate the wrongs; if I resent the latter, it is because they were intended me; and if I do not thank him for the other, it is because they were not: he would have poisoned me, but he overdosed it, and the excess of his malice has been my security.

To give him his due, he seems every where to write more from prejudice than opinion; he rails when he should reason, and for gentle reproofs uses scurrilous reproaches. He looks upon his adversaries to be his enemies; and to justify his opinion in that particular, before he has done with them, he makes them so. If there is any spirit in his argument, it evaporates and flies off unseen, through the heat of his passion. His passion does not only make him appear in many places to be in the

wrong, but it alſo makes him appear to be conſcious of it. That which ſhews the face of wit in his writing, has indeed no more than the face; for the head is wanting. Wit is at the beſt but the ſign to good underſtanding; it is hung out to recommend the entertainment which may be found within: and it is very well when the invitation can be made good. As the outward form of godlineſs is hypocriſy, which very often conceals irreligion, and immorality; ſo is wit alſo very often an hypocriſy, a ſuperficies glazed upon falſe judgment, a good face ſet on a bad underſtanding.

It is a maſk which Mr Collier ſometimes wears, but it does not fit the mould of his face; he preſumes too much on the ſecurity of his diſguiſe, and very often ventures till he is diſcovered: he does not know himſelf in his foreign dreſs, and from thence concludes that no body elſe can. His anceſtor of honoured memory, recorded in Æſop, miſcarried through the ſame ſelf-ſufficiency. Mr Collier, when he clothed himſelf in the lion's ſkin, ſhould have thought of an expedient of concealing his ears: but, it may be, he is proud of them, and thinks it proper to ſhew that he has them both, and at their full length.

He has put himſelf to ſome pain to ſhew his reading; and his reading is ſuch, that it puts us to pain to behold it. He diſcovers an ill taſte in books, and a worſe digeſtion. He has ſwallowed ſo much of the ſcum of others, that the overflowing of his own gall was ſuperfluous to make it riſe upon his ſtomach. But he ought in good manners to have ſtept aſide, and not to have been thus nauſeous and offenſive to the noſes of the whole country. But as his reading would not ſtay with him, ſo his writing ran away with him.

Ben Johnſon, in his Diſcoveries, ſays, "There be ſome "men are born only to ſuck the poiſon of books *." *Habent venenum pro victu imo pro deliciis.* "And ſuch are they that "only reliſh the obſcene and foul things in poets; which

* Johnſ. Diſc. p. 702.

"makes the profeſſion taxed: but by whom? Men that watch "for it," &c. Something farther in the ſame Diſcoveries, he is ſpeaking again very much to our purpoſe; for it is in juſtification of preſenting vicious and fooliſh characters on the ſtage in comedy. It ſeems ſome people were angry at it then; let us compare his picture of them, with the characters of thoſe who quarrel at it now *. "It ſufficeth," ſays he, "I know what kind of perſons I diſpleaſe, men "bred in the declining and decay of virtue, betrothed to "their own vices; that have abandoned or proſtituted "their good names; hungry and ambitious of infamy, in-"veſted in all deformity, enthralled to ignorance and ma-"lice, of a hidden and concealed malignity, and that hold "a concommitancy with all evil."

It is ſtrange that Mr Collier ſhould overſee theſe two paſſages, when he was ſimpling in the ſame field where they both grow. This is pretty plain; becauſe in the 51ſt page of his book he preſents you with a quotation from the ſame Diſcoveries, as one entire paragraph, though ſeverally collected from the 706 and 717th pages of the original; ſo that he has read both before, and beyond theſe paſſages. But a man that looks in a glaſs often, walks away, and forgets his reſemblance.

Mr Collier's vanity, in pretending to criticiſm, has extremely betrayed his ignorance in the art of poetry; this is manifeſt to all that underſtand it. And methinks his affectation of ſeeming to have read every thing, ſometimes betrays him to confeſſions that are not much to his advantage. I wonder he is not aſhamed to own, that he is ſo well acquainted with the ἐκκλησιαζούσαι of Ariſtophanes. The dialogues of Aretine, or Aloiſa, are not more obſcene than that piece. The author there, as Mr Bayes ſays, "does egad name the thing directly," and that in above a hundred places. But perhaps Mr Collier meant to veil that play under a *miſnommer* (to uſe his own phraſe †); and when he called it *concianotores*, thought we could not diſcover, that in ſpite of his artifice, or his ignorance, he

* Johnſ. Diſc. p. 114. † Coll. p. 44.

muſt mean no other than the lewd concionatrices, or parliament women of Ariſtophanes. He has indeed raked together a ſtrange number of authors names: but as Gideon's army of two-and-thirty thouſand was ordered to be reduced to three hundred; ſo his rabble of citations, without any loſs to him, might be reduced to a much leſs number; but his buſineſs is not diſcipline, but tumult. He appears like Captain Tom at the head of a people that are ſhuffled together, neither the world, nor they, nor he, can tell why: but ſince they are met, plunder is the word, and the playhouſe is firſt to be demoliſhed.

He has outdone Bays in his grand dance; nay, the heathen philoſophers, in their notions of the grand chaos, never imagined a greater confuſion. All religions, all countries, all ages are jumbled together, to explode what all religions, all countries, and all ages have allowed. He is not contented with his batalia, compounded of Bramins, Brachmans, Mufties, councils, fathers, the Biſhop of Arras, *&c.* But the philoſophers, nay, the very poets themſelves are preſſed into the ſervice.

Cicero endeavoured with all his might to get himſelf a name in poetry; and Ariſtotle preferred tragedy even to philoſophy. But Mr Collier has converted them both; in ſhort, between him and the Biſhop of Arras, they have been ſeduced and inveigled over to the other ſide.

He pretends to triumph in the heart of Parnaſſus, and has ſown diſſention in the boſoms of ſome of the chief proprietors. Ovid and the Plain-Dealer are revolted, and take arms againſt their brethren, while Mr Collier ſings, with Lucan and Hudibras of—civil fury, *&c.*

——" Populumque potentem,
" In ſua victrici converſum viſcera dextra:
" Cognataſque acies——
" Bays againſt Bays—et pila minantia pilis."

I wiſh his ſeeds of ſedition were ſcattered elſewhere; for here I think they will hardly thrive. What effect his doctrine in private families will have, I know not, when the ſuperiority comes to be diſputed between the country

gentlemen and their chaplains; or rather, as Mr Collier has eſtabliſhed it, between the chaplains and their country gentlemen.

I am not the only one who look on this pamphlet of his to be a gun levell'd at the whole laity, while the ſhot only glances on the theatre: what he means by the attack, or what may be its conſequences, I know not, and I ſuppoſe he cares not. "Bellum inchoant inertes, fortes finiunt." But there are thoſe who will not be diſpleaſed at an occaſion of making recriminations. With reſpect to his parts, it is no wiſe thing to give any body an example of ſearching into books for negligent and fooliſh expreſſions. Divines have ſometimes forgot themſelves in controverſial writings; diſputes begun, or pretended to have been begun on points of faith, have ended in ſcurrilous and perſonal reflections; and from tracts of divinity have degenerated into paſquils and lampoons. That Mr Collier has laid the foundation of ſuch a controverſy, I think is apparent; but I hope his credit is not ſufficient to engage any body to go on with the building.

He has aſſaulted the town in the ſeat of their principal and moſt reaſonable pleaſure. Down with the theatre right or wrong. "Delendo eſt Carthago," let the conſequence be what it will. That was a very raſh maxim; and if Cato had lived to have ſeen its effects, he would have repented it. To proſecute an ally (and that deſires no more than to continue in our alliance) as an enemy, is a weak and barbarous piece of policy.

Perſecution makes men perſevere in the right; and perſecution may make them perſiſt in the wrong. Men may, by ill uſage, be irritated ſometimes to aſſert and maintain even their very errors. Perhaps there is a vicious pride in triumphing in the worſt of the argument, which is very prevailing with the vanity of mankind. I cannot help thinking that our author is not without his ſhare of this vanity. I think truly he had a fair appear-

* P. 139.

ance of right on his side in the title page of his book; but with reason I think I may also affirm, that by this mismanagement he has very much weakened his title. He that goes to law for more than his right, makes his pretensions, even to that which is his right, suspected; as a true story loses its credit, when related from the mouth of a known liar.

Mr Collier's many false citations make his truth suspected; and his misapplication of his true citations very much arraigns both his judgment and sincerity. His authorities from the fathers (with all due respect to them) are certainly no more to the purpose, than if he had cited the two Attic laws against the licentiousness of the old comedy; in truth not so much: for the invectives of the fathers were levelled at the cruelty of the gladiators, and the obscenity of the pantomimes. If some of them have confounded the drama with such spectacles, it was an oversight of zeal very allowable in those days; and in the infancy of Christianity, when the religion of the heathens was intermingled with their poetry and theatrical representations; therefore Christians, then, might very well be forbidden to frequent even the best of them. As for our theatres, St Austin and Lactantius knew no more of them, than they did of the Antipodes; and they might with as much difficulty have been persuaded, that the former would in after-times be tolerated in a Christian state, as that the latter would be received for a manifest and common truth, and made intelligible to the capacity of every child *.

To what end has he made such a bugbear of the theatre? Why would he possess the minds of weak and melancholic people with such frightful ideas of a poor play? unless to sour the humours of the people of most leisure, that they might be more apt to mis-employ their vacant hours It may be there is not any where a people, who should

* Vid. St Aust. de Civ. Dei. L. 16. C. 9. et Lact. de fals. sap. 23.

leſs be debarred of innocent diverſions, than the people of England. I will not argue this point; but I will ſtrengthen my obſervation with one parallel to it from Polybius. That excellent author, who always moralizes in his hiſtory, and inſtructs as faithfully as he relates; in his fourth book, attributes the ruin of Cynethia by the Ætolians, in plain terms, to their degeneracy from their Arcadian anceſtors, in their neglect of theatrical and muſical performances. The Cynethians, ſays my author, had their ſituation the fartheſt north in all Arcadia; they were ſubjected to an inclement and uncertain air, and for the moſt part cold and melancholic; and, for this reaſon, they of all people ſhould laſt have parted with the innocent and wholeſome remedies, which the diverſions of muſic adminiſtred to that ſourneſs of temper, and ſullenneſs of diſpoſition, which of neceſſity they muſt partake from the diſpoſition and influence of their climate; "For they no "ſooner fell to neglect theſe wholeſome inſtitutions, than "they fell into diſſentions and civil diſcords, and grew at "length into ſuch depravity of manners, that their crimes "in number and meaſure ſurpaſſed all nations of the "Greeks beſide *."

He gives us to underſtand, that their chorufes on the theatres, their frequent aſſemblies of young people, men and women, mingling in muſical performances, were not inſtituted by their anceſtors out of wantonneſs and luxury, but out of wiſdom; from a deliberated and effectual policy, and for the reaſons above noted. Much more might be cited from Polybius, who has made a very conſiderable digreſſion on this occaſion.

The application of what I have borrowed is very plain. Is there in the world a climate more uncertain than our own? and which is a natural conſequence, is there anywhere a people more unſteady, more apt to diſcontent, more ſaturnine, dark and melancholic, than ourſelves? Are we not of all people the moſt unfit to be alone, and

* Vid. Tranſl. by Sir H. Sheer, Vol. 2. P. 49.

moſt unſafe to be truſted with ourſelves? Are there not more ſelf-murderers, and melancholic lunatics in England, heard of in one year, than in a great part of Europe beſides? From whence are all our ſects, ſchiſms, and innumerable ſubdiviſions in religion? whence our plots, conſpiracies, and ſeditions? who are the authors and contrivers of theſe things? Not they who frequent the theatres and conſorts of muſic. No: if they had, it may be Mr Collier's invective had not been levelled that way; his "gunpowder-treaſon plot upon muſic and plays (for he ſays "muſic is as dangerous as gunpowder *") had broke out in another place, and all his falſe-witneſſes been ſummoned elſewhere.

* P. 279.

THE END.

PR
3360
D73
v.2

Congreve, William
Dramatic works

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY